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*Notanda Electa Britannica.*

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# SELECT OBSERVATIONS

RELATIVE TO

M A T T E R S

*Ecclesiastical and Political:*

ADAPTED TO

344  
THE CIRCUMSTANCES

OF THE

P R E S E N T T I M E S.

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**Bristol :**

PRINTED BY LANCASTER AND EDWARDS.

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1794.



TO  
THE PARLIAMENT  
OF  
Great Britain,  
THE FOLLOWING  
WEIGHTY CONSIDERATIONS,  
AND  
FREE OBSERVATIONS,  
ON  
GREAT AND IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,  
ARE  
HUMBLY INSCRIBED.

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T O

*The most Reverend Father in God,*

J O H N,

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

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MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

**T**O regard with a Temper of Christian Condescension, an Endeavor to promote the Establishment of *Peace* and *Truth* in the Earth.

And, may God grant that the miserable Consequences which must inevitably result from the Continuation of those Measures which the Powers of Europe have been led to take respecting the deplorably infatuated People of *France*, may be timely prevented, by your Grace being moved from the Consideration of what this Treatise contains, to recommend it to the Attention of the Members of the British Legislature.

Blessed

Blessed be God, the Season for adopting the proffered Plans of effecting a *General Peace* and *Reformation*, is not yet past. May your Grace be stirred up to exert your Influence, as the First Officer of our National Church, in securing to her the Glorious Distinction of being the First in Christendom to reform her Polity freely, and reduce it to the Standard of Christian Purity.

So shall we avert the heavy Judgments of God that hang over us ; and Your Grace will be eminently instrumental in restoring to the Church of Christ, the Energy of her primitive Times ; the Blessed Effects of which will be, the Discomfiture of *Falsehood*, and the *General Establishment of Truth* and *Peace* throughout the Earth.



## TO THE PUBLIC.



THE following Work, which is only an Epitome of the Author's original Design, was finished in the Month of *June*, 1793. Though the Author has endeavored, with the most anxious Solitude, to present it as speedily as possible to public Notice, yet from various Incidents the Publication has not taken Place till now.

Since TIME has abundantly verified the Truth of his Remarks, and the Soundness of his Argumentation hitherto, he presumes there is a just Claim on the serious Attention of Mankind, respecting those weighty Matters recommended in the ensuing Discourse to public Consideration.

As to the general Notions and public Opinions so exceedingly rife in the present Times, they will be found to teem with much Error, more Falsehood, very little Truth. The Word of God is designed to be a Lamp to enlighten the World: it needs but to be set on a conspicuous Eminence, and it will dissipate the Mists of Error, confound Falsehood, and illuminate the Earth with the glorious Beams of *Truth*.

Lamentable indeed are the Effects of that blind Ignorance which so generally and so dismally operates

rates in the Minds of the Sons of Men. It is this prevents them from discerning the Cause of God's notable Judgments in the Earth : this keeps them unacquainted with the Nature of that grievous Malady, that epidemical Mania, which now deprives the World of Peace.

But, blessed be God ! There is not only a Way here pointed out, whereby the Nature of this mental Ailment may be evidently discovered, and the Cause traced out; but a sure and certain Remedy is also here made known.

The late Royal Declaration concerning the calamitous War in which we are now engaged, notwithstanding it breaths a Spirit of Mildness expressive of an earnest Desire to accelerate the Return of Peace, yet is it inefficient, and so will it most certainly be found to be, as to the Point it aims at : inasmuch as it seeks to justify on the Score of Equity, Measures which could never have been deemed expedient, except on the Consideration of their naturally arising in the Issue of a weak Policy, founded on the grossest Ignorance and Pride.

We ought not, either directly or indirectly, to have countenanced the Emperor and the King of Prussia, in commencing<sup>13</sup> War with France. The Plea that the French had invaded the Rights of the German Princes, was insufficient to do away  
the

the Impolicy of a War. The peculiar Case of the French Nation ought to have been well considered. The outstretched Hand of God in causing that signal Convulsion within her, ought to have been so seen, as to have suggested to the great Nations around her, the most prudential Measures to be mutually adopted in a Situation so peculiarly awakening and unprecedented. Such Measures were pointed out to the Notice and recommended to the Acceptance of my Country in particular, in that Publication I set forth about the *Midsummer* of 1791.

May the reiterated and earnest Recommendation of them in the following Essay awaken the Attention of Mankind, and induce the Public Mind rightly to consider the Great Work that God is effecting among the Sons of Men! Being duly admonished by the public Distractions and Perplexities of the present Times, may we be led to see the Rod, and HIM *who* hath appointed it: that being no longer blinded by our Ignorance, nor hardened by the Pride of our Hearts, we may joyfully co-operate with the Design of Providence in bringing about the Establishment of such a System of UNIVERSAL REFORMATION, as may be eminently to the Glory of God in the Highest, and produce the greatest Increase of Peace and Good Will among the Children of Men.

Published in AUGUST, 1791.

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A MIRROR for the TIMES!

OR,

A Complete Detection and Refutation

OF THE

*Pseudo-Philosophy*

OF

LEVELLING SOPHISTERS.

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AS PAINE'S nefarious Publication had been, and was then generally read; the Author of the above Work imagined the Public would be more readily inclined to peruse it, if offered under the following Title, being that which it at present publicly bears.

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A REJOINDER

TO

Mr. PAINE'S PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

R I G H T S O F M A N,

OR

An ANSWER to Mr. BURKE'S ATTACK

ON THE

*FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

---

BY AN ENGLISHMAN.

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*Ne scriptori, sed scriptis respice.*

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## Notanda Electa Britannica.

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JULY, 1792.

**I**T is now above a Twelvemonth since I first undertook to expose the fallacious Doctrine of modern Reformers, and to set myself in Opposition to the Pseudo-Philosophy of those Firebrands of Society, the levelling Sophisters of the present Day.

Before I draw forth those important Observations which a Sense of Duty, and an earnest Desire to be instrumental in promoting the Cause of *Truth*, have prompted me to offer to public Consideration, it may not be unadvisable to descend to some personal Particulars; that the Motive which induces me to present my private Thoughts to the Public, being seen, may attract a deeper Attention to the momentous Matter intended to be handled in the ensuing Pages.

Were I to give an historical Detail of the many very remarkable Incidents that have befallen me in the Course of my Life, though my Years have passed in still, retired Scenes, yet I believe the Lives of very few Individuals would be found to abound with more observable Occurrences. Suffice it to

B

say,

lay, the Experience of my Life evinces to my Mind the clearest Demonstration of the Veracity of that Doctrine I have been moved to elucidate.

Busily and incessantly engaged in an Avocation that from my earliest Years has wholly engrossed my Time, I have not been able heretofore to find Leisure or Convenience to methodize my Thoughts; yet from a very early Period of my Life I have had a continual Prescience that one Time or other I should be called to employ my Pen in Behalf of the *Truth*.

Though this Prescience has for a Number of Years been more and more deeply impressed on my Mind, and though my Gift of Discernment is singular, as in many remarkable Instances I might prove; yet have I not vaunted myself hereupon; but have in all Respects (considering it my highest Wisdom so to do) patiently and dutifully resigned myself to the Direction and Dispensation of Providence, as the whole Course and Tenor of my Life will abundantly prove; studying to be quiet, and to do my own Business, and to work with my own Hands.

Notwithstanding an earnest Desire to be subservient in promoting the Cause of *Truth*, has uniformly pervaded my Conduct through Life; and though for many Years past I have had a strong Persuasion that I should be called to write in its Defence, yet till the Pamphlet on the *Rights of Man* accidentally fell into my Hands, no *Data* had been given me whereon I might ground my Remarks.

But



But when I read that Book, though by a peculiar Visitation of Providence I was so circumstanced, that it might have been deemed Madness, straightened as I then was, and hemmed in on all Sides, to entertain the least Idea of writing and publishing my Thoughts thereupon, especially considering I had to encounter the greatest Difficulties and Inconveniences in every Respect, not having an Hour I might call my own ; and moreover seeing I should have to oppose and refute a Doctrine at that Time almost universally espoused and maintained ; yet was I in a manner, impelled to turn my Thoughts to the Subject : and though my outward Discouragements did exceedingly dismay, yet were they found quite insufficient to deter me from listening to what I have constantly considered, *A powerful and immediate Call from above.*

Reading that Book, I heard a Voice distinctly speaking in mine Ear, *Refute the false Doctrine of this sly Deceiver.* And though outwardly every Thing conspired to distract and turn off my Thoughts, yet was I inwardly more and more vehemently excited to the Prosecution of that Work, which will undoubtedly acquire Weight and Consideration from the rising Circumstances of the Times.

Touching my Purpose in addressing the Public in the present Instance, I am specially moved and incited thereto from the Consideration that the *Fullness of Time* is nearly at Hand, when Mankind being wearied with the Ways and Works of *Vanity*, groaning under the heavy Pressure and bitter Thralldom of *mental Tyranny*, and awakened to a just

Sense of their Wants, and a right Apprehension of their own total Inability to supply them; by the gracious Intervention of the adorable Goodness of God, will be happily delivered from their long and hard Bondage, and wonderfully restored to *intellectual Enlargement and Deliverance*.

Perfectly convinced that this *Glorious Advent* will in the Course of the Exercise of the Wisdom of God in the Ways of His Providence most certainly appear; and enabled by the Grace of God to prove even to the Clearness of a Mathematical Demonstration that it is now near at hand; moreover, aided by the gracious Influence of the Divine Spirit whom I fervently invoke, I humbly submit the subsequent Sentiments, Remarks, and Proposals, to the Notice and Attention of my Country and Mankind.

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THE late Royal Proclamation for the Suppression of seditious and inflammatory Writings, however well intended for the Maintenance of Order in the State, and the Preservation of the *Public Peace*, by discouraging the Spirit of *Faction* on the one Hand, and recommending *Due Submission* and *Subordination* on the other, will yet be found to fall far short of the End proposed. For till *Magistrates* do indeed set about in good Earnest, to advance the *Glory of God*, by promoting the Knowledge of *His Truth* in the World, and discharging the Duties of their *high Functions*, conscientiously and exemplarily; neither Proclamations on the one Side, nor  
public

public Punishments on the other will ever be found sufficient to silence *popular Clamour*, or prevent the Mischiefs of *restive Sedition*.

The dreadful Example of *public Confusion* and *national Misery* brought upon our neighbouring Kingdom, is held out to us, and to the Magistrates and People of all Nations, as a *solemn Warning and Admonition*; calling loudly for a careful Examination into the Causes, why Providence has suffered such severe Judgments to befall both Prince and People: that hereby being duly instructed, and recollecting and reforming the Evil of our Ways, we may escape the Rod of Divine Vengeance, and be saved from the Stroke of God's Wrath.

The Concurrence of great and singular Events, peculiar to the present Age of the World, and following close one upon another, is intended as an *awakening Call* to excite the *General Attention* of Mankind.

The *Great Revolution* in the Government of *France*, is a Topic that has been universally handled. Numbers have employed their Pens, and exercised their Thoughts on this momentous Subject. The Great, the Witty, the Learned, the Seditious, the Lawyers, and the Priests, have each in their Turn, exercised their Genius hereon. But who is there of all these, to whom the Truth hath been revealed, and the Ground of the Matter made known? Which of them has ascribed due Honor and Glory to God, for this so signal Retribution of His *Justice*, and so evident Manifestation of His *righteous Judgment*.

Immersed

Immersed in the Depth of the Darkeness of Ignorance, the Generality of Mankind in the present Day, are totally unacquainted with the Methods of God's Dealings with the Children of Men. Nay, to such a Pitch of Error and Infatuation is the World at present risen, that had not God in the Depth of His Wisdom provided an *ample Witness* between himself and His Creatures, the Footsteps of *Truth* would be utterly undiscernible.

Need we refer to the History of *France*, to prove the just Judgment of God, in her present Visitation.

If Pride and Arrogance, notorious Impiety, and systematical Oppression, Perfidy, and Fraud, are in themselves, grievous Offences ; and such, as in the constant Experience of Ages, have been found to draw down the dreadful Vengeance of Heaven, both upon Nations and Individuals ; a Survey of the General Manners and Conduct of the French People, must necessarily bring Conviction to the Mind, that the present State and Condition of that Nation, is the Effect of a most exact and righteous Dispensation of *Divine Justice*, for their manifold, long-continued, heinous, and crying Enormities.

She, who for a long Season, has been the General Disturber of the Peace of Mankind, the Mistress of Intrigue, the Fomenter of Discord ; by whose baneful Influence and insidious Arts, Animosities and Strifes have been constantly excited ; in a Moment is her Power dissolved, and all her deep Schemes at once broken off and defeated.

The Policy of the ruling Power in this Country in keeping entirely aloof under the present Circumstances.

stances of Things, is very justly to be recommended, considering that the Distresses and Perplexities with which the Almighty is at present visiting the Nations, may be deemed an equitable Measure of their former Ways. But ill shall we deserve the highly favorable Distinction which Providence confers upon us, if we let slip the present precious Opportunity of demonstrating our Zeal in advancing the Glory of God.

Let us not pride ourselves in vain Conceit, that we are a Whit better than other People ; since both Individuals and Nations are estimated in the Judgment of God, according to the Measure of their Improvement of the Opportunities laid in their Ways.

The Hour is at length arrived, the Moment is now come, when the legitimate Rulers of this World, will find even their temporal Interest arousing and exciting them to adopt laudable and rational Improvements, and to advance *A general Reformation* ; and such is the advanced Age of the World, and the present State of Mankind, that Nothing short of a real and substantial Reformation will now be found to serve.

But some will say, while dissönant Opinions violently agitate the public Mind, Plans of Reformation are altogether ill-timed and unseasonable.

To such I reply, The Temper of Mankind is naturally inclined to Indolence. Inglorious Sloth has ever been more generally prevalent than honorable Activity. Owing to this natural Propensity to Indolence and Ease, Tyrannies of all Sorts, Superstition,

stition, and the darkest Ignorance, have not only obtained Place in the World, but have been tamely submitted to with passive Content. Now when the Almighty in the Course of His Providence purposes to bring about some notable Change in the State of Things, He permits the Evil Spirits (the Harbingers of his merciful Manifestations) by stirring up in the Minds of Men, a Conflict of distorted Ideas, to discompose this inert, fixed State : that so, Mankind being roused from their natural Torpidity, and awakened to Attention ; tired and exhausted in this Conflict of erroneous Subtilties, and panting for Quiet, they become the readier susceptible of rational Impressions, and better disposed to embrace the Convictions of *Truth*.

Contemplating then the peculiar Circumstances of the present Time, the present may be considered a special Season for prosperously adopting salutary Reforms.

Mankind, at different Periods, have been much agitated and disturbed by the Fanaticism of intemperate Zealots, instigated by infernal Agency : but this, instead of answering the End of diabolical Malice, has ever proved the Means of establishing the Purpose of God.

The levelling Theorists in the Audacity of their Presumption, have taken upon them to cut out for all Nations, a specific Form of Government ; namely, *the Republican* ; and to this one Form they attribute every Excellence and every Perfection : notwithstanding it is evident in the Nature of Things, from the different Circumstances of different People :  
such

such as Natural Temper or Genius, Population, Extent of Territory, Situation, and the like ; that the Formation of the Organs of the collective Powers of Nations, must depend on *National Contingences* : moreover we are taught to believe, both from Reason and Revelation, that these *National Contingences* are Nothing less than the Result of *Divine Determination*. But these Sophists exactly resembling their sottish Predecessors, the visionary Builders of *The Tower of Babel*, in the Fullness of their Pride and selfish Conceit, have disavowed the Propriety of being led by religious Influence. Revelation therefore to them, is as *Verba incognita et vituperata*. Seeing they have thus disdainfully rejected, reproached, and villified, the *Sacred Oracles of Truth*, it is meet they should fall under the Error of their vain Imaginations.

But there is no Reason why those who are influenced by a real, honest, and temperate Zeal for the Honor of God and the Happiness of Mankind, should be deterred from its actual Exercise, because these Men, proudly rejecting the Authority of Scripture, and trusting to the blind Guidance of mere natural Reason, have set themselves up for *public Reformers* ; and have by the subtil Deception of their pernicious Tenets, brought innumerable Disorders on those who have been beguiled by their Sophistry. Nay, there is all the Reason in the World for the *Honest enlightened* now to bestir themselves ; for the Season is approaching of an unexampled Triumph to the Cause of *Truth*. July, 1792.

Nov. 1792. Since writing the above, owing to the unavoidable Calls of my necessary Business,

my Mind has been diverted for the Space of four Months, from the further Prosecution of my Purpose ; neither at present do I see any Opening whereby Leisure may be obtained for delivering my Thoughts in the Latitude at first designed.

But though cramped in the greatest Degree, with Respect to Time, yet as the miserable Effects of Fanaticism and popular Error are hourly spreading more and more their baneful Influence, I cannot longer refrain from presenting to the Public, a few slight Sketches of a System, which under the Auspices of Divine Favor, may happily counteract the mischievous Tendency of those diabolical Principles so exceedingly rife in the present Day.

Clearly foreseeing that the desolating Principle of modern Licentiousness, artfully disguised under the specious and high-sounding Name of Liberty, would continue to insinuate and spread its pestilential Contagion, unless *Magistrates*, the *Conservators* of public Peace and Order, would set themselves with an Honest Zeal, not merely to refute the flimsy Sophistry of these shallow, newfangled Notions, but chiefly to point out clearly to the People, wherein real Liberty, Glory, and Happiness, do consist ; to the End therefore that the Rulers of my Country might be awakened to a Sense of their Duty, and excited to employ the Means put into their Hands in promoting the Glory of God, and advancing the general Interest and Happiness of Mankind ; being conscious of the Gift wherewith I am intrusted, and studious to render it, as much as may be, beneficial ; I took upon me, at the Time when my former Work was first published, to address



dress it to the executive Power ; being persuaded the surest and best Method may be found therein, whereby an Antidote might be prepared against the abominable Licentiousness and Iniquity of the Times.

Now this my first Application to the executive Power not being noticed, I was induced about this Time Twelvemonth to make another.

It must be imagined, the Motive which could induce me, a Man obscure and of low Degree, to address myself to so exalted a Character as Mr. Pitt, was a strong One : and the Nature of the Matter being well considered, a very cogent Motive it undoubtedly will be found to be.

A deplorable Degree of Ignorance in the Ways and Methods of Providence, has for a long Season pervaded all Ranks, Patrician as well as Plebeian ; and notwithstanding there has fallen out a Confluence of most signally striking Events, which ought to have awakened the Rulers of Nations, particularly the Powers of Government in this Country, and to have determined them freely to adopt wholesome Regulations and rational Reforms ; yet do they remain rigidly attached to their old Policy, and shew themselves indifferent in advancing the Work of God.

To stir up then the Minds of those to whom is intrusted the Administration of public Affairs, and to awaken their Attention to that particular Point of Duty, which eminently becomes such, from the Exigency of the Times, I was led once and again to make my earnest Application.

But the Mind being clouded by Passion and enveloped in Error, is disqualified to perceive the clear Demonstrations of Truth, or to listen to the still Voice of Reason. To restore therefore to the Intellect a right Tone of Perception, it is necessary the Passions be disturbed, and the whole mental Frame sustain a violent Shock of strong Perturbation.

The Affairs of *France* are eminently intended to produce this Effect, so highly desirable and most devoutly to be wished for; namely, to restore to the Understanding, a just Perception, by clearing from the Mind the Mists of Error and intellectual Prejudice.

The *French Revolution* was a sudden Irruption of all Sorts of heterogeneous Qualities: and was a natural Consequence of the prior Manners, Mode of Government, Extent of Territory, and Disposition of that People.

The Sons of pertinacious Error ever tenacious of their own perverted and evil Ideas, proudly setting up their own wild Whim and Caprice as the Standard of right Judgment, have bestowed upon this outrageous Conspiracy against natural Justice, the most extravagant Encomiums: representing it as the *Grand Criterion* whereby to prove the natural Excellence and Dignity of Man: nevertheless succeeding Times will view both it and its wretched Enormities as the most unequivocal Demonstration and clearest Evidence of human Depravity.

And because the Providence of God, for wise and good Reasons, sometimes permits Usurpations and the most barfaced Injustice seemingly to prosper  
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for a While, these modern Philosophers, the arrogant Pretenders to Illumination, presumptuously ascribe Equity to their most iniquitous Proceedings; colouring the most outrageous Acts of Violence, and the most shocking and execrable Barbarities, under the specious Pretext of the Exercise of Authority derived from what they term *Rights of Man*.

In this deplorable Time of general Ignorance, it is Nothing to be wondered at that these bewitching Principles should ensnare and captivate the Hearts of the untaught Vulgar: seeing in them is contained the most exquisite Subtilty of satanic Policy.

But let not the honest Heart be dismayed, or think it strange that the Almighty Ruler of the World should in this advanced Period of Time permit so dreadful a Deception to prey upon the human Mind: for seeing God is about to enter into a strong Controversy with the Nations, He has chosen this as the special Means of arousing them out of their fatal Security, and awakening them to a Sense of their best Interest: that so, *Falshood* being vanquished through its own Machination, the glorious *Truth* may triumphantly shine forth with unexampled Brightness and Resplendency.

Great is the Degree of general Infatuation! Though all the Princes and Potentates of the Earth should closely combine together, and unitedly wage War against the Partizans of this new-sprung Doctrine, yet would they be found to be utterly unconquerable by Arms: such an Opposition, instead of quelling, would serve but to invigorate  
their

their Strength, and bring fresh Accessions to their Numbers.

But some may ask, What then ? Are we quietly to suffer these new Teachers, the Pretenders to Illumination, to propagate their abominable Doctrine ; and by sly Arts and cunningly devised Stratagems to draw aside the unwary ?

I answer, No, by no Means : they must not be let alone. It is incumbent upon us, out of an honest Zeal, vehemently to fight against these subtil and insidious Workers of Evil. But let us take heed we use no improper Weapon in this Warfare. The Sword of Proof by which we may conquer these atheistical Subverters of the Peace and Happiness of Society, will be found to be, *The Word of God*.

Had the legitimate Rulers of Christendom, when first the formidable Power of that tyrannically meddling and enterprizing People was broken, had the Powers of Christendom, I say, embraced the Opportunity, when first the Strength of *France* was destroyed, of mutually guaranteeing their respective Rights ; and being hereby delivered from the further Apprehension of foreign War, (a Blessing not to be prized, and which yet awaits the Acceptance of the well-disposed,) being, I say, hereby delivered from that grievous Scourge, that sore Plague of long Continuance ! Had they proceeded in the true Spirit of Christian Liberty, to institute in their respective Jurisdictions, a free and rational Enquiry into the Means of meliorating Society ; and enlarging the Happiness of Mankind ; and let them be well assured, the longer they delay to fulfil with Earnestness this particular

particular Duty of their high Functions, which the Ripeness and peculiar Fitness of the present Times ought to stimulate them immediately to turn in their Minds ; the longer they delay, the more grievously will they tempt the affronted Majesty of Heaven to inflict upon them the terrible Effects of His dreadful Displeasure ; had they, to repel the insidious Attacks of their Adversaries, instead of having Recourse to Arms, openly manifested a truly liberal Spirit, in readily setting on Foot a rational and free Enquiry into the Means whereby they might best prevent the threatening Evils of Sedition, Anarchy, and public Misery ; how moreover with Honor and Security to themselves, they might best assert and maintain those particular individual Rights which both God and Nature sanction and allow ; and by what Means they might most effectually, that is, most happily and honorably exercise those Rights, in promoting the End for which they were designed, namely, the Maintenance of Justice and Order, and the Support of the public Weal ; had the lawful Rulers and Governors of Christendom, with a becoming Spirit, timely united in a well directed Opposition to the antichristian Tenets of these wicked Men, they might have prevented in a great Degree, the doleful Mischiefs of their accursed Devices.

But they have shewn themselves more eager in avenging their own personal Quarrel, than in maintaining the Cause of God.

Can it appear strange then that God in Anger should confound their Counsels, and disappoint their Views ?

But

But let the Princes and Potentates whom the Almighty in the Course of His Providence has legally appointed to execute Righteousness and Judgment in the Earth, let them by a zealous Attention to their first Duty prove themselves worthy of the high Station to which they are called ; then will God arise in their Behalf, and manifest the adorable Goodness and Riches of his Grace.

But if it be a Duty incumbent on the Powers of Christendom in General to oppose to these irreligious Seducers, the sure and steadfast Doctrine of God's Word, how ought the Government of this Country, which enjoys so highly favored a Distinction among the Nations, to be foremost in the Manifestation of a truly Christian Zeal !

However the Rulers of Christendom may in Time past have imagined their Security has lien in keeping the People in a blind Ignorance, they will now most assuredly find both their Safety and their Glory in zealously supporting and fostering the speedy Propagation of the Knowledge of the *Truth*.

Happy would it be for my Country, unspeakably happy, would she but set herself with Alacrity and a becoming Christian Spirit, to fulfil the high Designation of Heaven, and nobly take the Lead among the Nations, in exhibiting to the World a glorious Exemplar of Christian Purity and Perfection : and let her well remember she owes her present Elevation to the Spirit of her Constitution ; and for that Constitution she is indebted (under Providence) to her prior Attainments in the superior Knowledge and Practice of Christianity : for true Christianity  
and

and true Liberty are perfectly congenial, and are ever closely allied together ; as is Antichristianity to its natural Concomitants, Tyranny and Slavery.

While her versatile and perfidious Neighbour, ever noted for exercising her great Power and national Faculty, in mean, disgraceful, and wretched Pursuits ; and now wretchedly occupied in the abominable Work of loosening the Bands of Society, and setting all Ranks of Mankind at Variance, one with the other ; whilst she is thus dishonorably employed in disseminating the Seeds of Animosity throughout the Earth ; how truly happy and glorious would it be for my Country to be distinguished as the real Enlightener of Nations, and the Dispenser (under God) of the choicest Blessings to the Children of Men !

Could the French Nation in General, have been led to believe, at the Time they suffered those fiery, hot-brained, and restless Characters among them, those high-toned Declaimers against Despotism, (many of whom were doubtless actuated by good Motives) when they suffered those busy Spirits, by availing themselves of the Circumstances of the Moment, to engross to themselves a Power absolutely unwarrantable, and which they were not legally constituted to exercise ; and totally regardless whether they obtained or obtained not the full and free Consent of the several Parties materially concerned ; eagerly, (but unjustifiably) construing a tacit Compliance into a legal Acknowledgement and free Choice ; changing the Name of their legitimate Constitution, that of the *States General*, into that of

the *National Assembly* ; (under which specious Appellation, the Conspiracy and Usurpation of a lawless Combination is artfully concealed) could the French Nation, I say, have been persuaded in the first Instance, that from their Supineness in thus letting their legally appointed Representatives seize the Opportunity to impose on their Credulity, and subverting the Rule of their own Ordination, self-elect themselves into a spurious Body, the natural Tone of whose Measures would inevitably bring them to the dreadful Alternative, either of sanctioning the most illegal Institutions, thereby subjecting themselves to the basest and cruelest of all Tyrannies, that which grants no Toleration to a dissenting Opinion, but with brutal Force requires *all* indiscriminately to obey its arbitrary and imperious Mandates ; or else to expose themselves to the most tragical Disasters, a Life of Infamy or a cruel Death in their own Country, or a wretched Exile and miserable Existence in foreign Climes ; could the French People have been led clearly to see the horrid Consequences which would most surely result from the Exercise of that Power which the Body of Men calling itself the *National Assembly* would take upon them to arrogate to themselves ; they would, without Doubt, have prevented to the utmost, its illegal Assumption.

But *France* was not permitted to see this. National Sins must be expiated by national Punishments. Grievous indeed the crying Sins of *France* must be, great the Provocations which could occasion



caſion ſo terrible a Viſitation and ſuch fore Judgments as have befallen her.

But *France* has not yet filled up the Meaſure of her Crimes. She muſt yet be a dreadful Scourge, both to herſelf and to the Reſt of the unrighteous Nations: to the which ſhe is moſt exactly fitted and eminently prepared; ſeeing in Addition to the notable Curſe of Vengeance, *Inſatuation*, Providence has ſuffered her to obtain a ſignal Enlargement of Power.

*France*, as a Nation publicly profeſſing Chriſtianity, has for a Series of Years, in the Temper of her public Conduſt, flagrantly ſcandalized her Profeſſion in the open Face of all the World: the more ſo, from the Rank and Conſequence ſhe has vauntingly taken to herſelf among the Chriſtian States.

But the Almighty ever inflicts the moſt exact and righteous Punishments on perfidious Delinquents.

*France*, notwithstanding her outward Profeſſion, has uniformly and ſyſtematically acted by Fraud and Injuſtice. Inſtead of adhering to the excellent Precepts of her Profeſſion, *Not to render Evil for Evil, but rather to overcome Evil with Good*, ſhe has conſtantly adopted that profane Maxim, *Let us do Evil that Good may come*.

To charge national Calamities altogether to the Score of the Government, is extremely erroneous. Public Governments are only in the leaſt Degree accountable for public Miſfortunes. Evil Governments in general proceed from evil Diſpoſitions in the People who are governed.

The *French*, in the Heat of their political Intoxication, are loudly proclaiming to the World their own Futility and Littleness of Character: for while they so extravagantly inveigh against the Government under which they so long Time lived, they are openly manifesting the ridiculous Folly and Vanity of their boasted Pretensions to Magnanimity.

A People possessing but small Power and Consequence in the Scale of Nations, notwithstanding the Cast of their national Genius be truly brave and liberal, yet from local Circumstances, may be necessitated to submit to a Frame of Government in the greatest Degree objectionable: but for a Nation possessing such superlatively great Advantages as the French confessedly has, for such a Nation to suffer a Government so exceedingly objectionable, as theirs, they so passionately complain has been; this affords but poor Proof of national Dignity and Elevation of Mind.

Had *Louis* the Fourteenth, been placed at the Head of a magnanimous, brave, and generous People, would they have suffered him to disgrace the Page of History by so shameful an Abuse of the great Power with which he was invested? Could they so generally have fallen into a Spirit of such base Vassalage, and mean sycophantic Adulation? But the Spirit and Manners of that Prince were perfectly characteristic of the Disposition of his People.

The

The Despotism they make such a blustering Stir about. and which gained so great an Ascendancy in that Reign, arose, it is evident, more from the mean-spirited Pusillanimity of the People than from any remarkably great Exertions on the Part of the Government.

How vilely criminal will Posterity view the present Conduct of the French Nation, when it comes to be considered, (as most assuredly it will be) that the political Evils they are now with so much acrimonious Rage and unparalleled brutish Cruelty charging to the Blame of their rightful Governors, were principally occasioned by themselves.

*Infatuation* is the sure and dreadful Curse of wilful Injustice: and it is the miserable Curse of Infatuation to be driven impetuously into all Extremes.

*France*, over and above her other manifold Exorbitances, her busy, meddling, and encroaching Spirit, her Restlessness and Promptitude of Temper in disturbing the Repose of Mankind, her Lust of Domination in General, and her insatiable Thirst after Self-Aggrandisement, viewing the growing Greatness of this Country with a jealous and an envious Eye, has, as it were, collected the several noxious Qualities of her evil Disposition into a Focus, the more powerfully to operate in causing the Disturbance, and if possible, the Overtthrow of her hated Rival.

What subtil Arts, what far-fetched and cunning Devices, what Plots and Stratagems, what avowed Hostilities, what crafty, perfidious, and secret Intrigues,

trigues, has she not made use of, to compass the Ruin of a quiet and inoffensive, yet brave and resolute People !

In vain does she go about to set up plausible Excuses, endeavouring to palliate a Conduct she knows is shameful to avow.

Frustrated in her Purposes, and so often foiled in her Attempts, observing that the Genius of this Country rises superior to every Attack, she feels herself forced to pay an unwilling Homage to the Virtue she has so contemptuously despised.

But this she does with an ill-becoming Grace. Retaining still her old Leaven of rancorous Hatred and bitter Jealousy, she pretends to Friendship and Good-Will, whilst at the same Time she is meditating further and deeper Schemes of Mischief ; under the colourable Disguise of a respectful Attachment to English Liberty.

Though the Bulk of the People in the present Day, with Respect to just Notions, and a right Judgment of Things, are wofully defective ; yet many there are who are able exactly to discriminate and nicely to distinguish.

Silly Birds, 'tis true, may be caught with Chaff. The *French* must imagine us to be contemptibly weak indeed, if they suppose they can easily wheedle us out of our Reason by their dexterous Manœuvres. Do they think we shall lightly be taken in their Toils ? Or, that they can with Facility induce us to exchange the inestimable Blessing of Sterling Liberty for the fearful Curse of Vengeance, Gallic Licentiousness ?

They

They pretend to make their Court to English Liberty ; but this is merely an invidious Compliment : they would persuade us our Liberty is only nominal : and that they themselves are the only People who possess true Liberty in Perfection, together with its levelling Appendage, Equality.

That under the kind Influence of Genuine Liberty flowing from a free and noble Constitution this Country has prospered in a matchless Degree, History bears undeniable Evidence : but this Liberty and this Constitution, through which under Providence, this Country has experienced such unequalled Blessings, these modern Politicians treat with sovereign Contempt. They pretend that the Liberty we possess is but just sufficient to enslave ourselves ; and as to our Constitution, they with a brazen Effrontery deny we have any at all.

So then this Liberty and this Constitution, our Boast and our Glory, under which we have prospered beyond all Compare, these Men with unparalleled Assurance, decry as incomplete.

What then is the complete Liberty they would fain recommend ?

Such a Liberty as is totally incompatible with the Principles of natural Justice.

The Liberty they mean to recommend, is an unrestrained Freedom to do whatever an Individual or a Society shall think fit, be it right or wrong ; setting up their own distinct and private Will as the Standard of Justice to themselves. So that whatsoever they may happen to deem objectionable, though it be an Object in which the Happiness of Millions is materially interested, yet it matters not

at all for that; if it meets with their Disapprobation that is sufficient for them; and enough to determine them to go to the full Extent of their Purpose.

For Instance. They object to regal Government. Whether this be a Form in itself good, bad, or indifferent, we will not at present take upon us to consider: but that it is the Kind of Government which has most generally obtained in the World in all Ages and among all Nations, the most polished and civilized, as well as the most barbarous, we have clear and ample Testimony.

Now these Circumstances alone, namely, the venerable Antiquity and almost universal Prevalency of this Sort of Government, would most assuredly induce a truly enlightened and righteous People (who perhaps irritated by grievous Abuses, and those of long Continuance, under their regal Governors, may have been brought to contemplate the Expediency of making a Change in the Form of their Government) these Circumstances, I say, would influence a wise and just Nation to proceed in such a Matter with the utmost Precaution. Nothing rash or precipitate in so weighty and exceedingly momentous an Affair, as that of changing the long continued Form of national Government, would debase their Measures.

They would consider Men as Men, under every Circumstance of Things: and making every reasonable Allowance not only for human Errors and Infirmities, but also for that confined Sphere of Action which degenerated Constitutions must necessarily occasion, they would be extremely tender and cautious in charging to the Man the Blame of the

the evil Institution under which he acts : above all, being to improve and renovate, or totally to change a hitherto fixed System and settled Condition of Things, they would have special Regard to the Principles of natural Justice ; considering that no Individual can possibly in the Nature of Things be individually held culpable except for his own personal Demerit : and that for the Inconveniences resulting from evil Institutions, the whole Community is in its collective Capacity to be collectively accountable.

On this equitable Principle, which is the only Ground of just Decision, they would consider an Individual who is legally appointed to an Office, as long as he fulfils the Duties of his Function, to be as justly entitled to his political Right, namely, the legal Condition and Terms on which he holds his Office, as he is in his natural Capacity to his natural Right, namely, the Protection of Life and Property.

And if in the Course of Experience, it should be deemed expedient for promoting the public Benefit, to abolish such Office, a wise and just People would consider an Individual who legally holds it, and who fulfils the Duties of it, to be entitled for his Acquiescence in such Abolition, to a full Indemnification.

As to personal Punishments for official Offences, those are altogether abhorrent to the Spirit and Principle of natural Justice. For official Offences, Justice requires official and not personal Punishments. Now the official Punishment for the Abuse

of Office, is merely Deprivation of such Office from the delinquent Party ; unless, previous to his Acceptance of the Office, the legal Condition under which he was to hold it, specified other Pains and Penalties besides Deprivation.

Had the *English* when *James the Second* by his ill-advifed Conduct incurred the Forfeiture of his Crown : had the *English*, I fay, proceeded to take a Meafure they were not legally warranted to exercife ; and under the Colour of Juftice, after the Example of the vile Treatment of the Father, had they inflicted an extrajudicial Punifhment on the Son ; they would not have experienced in this Cafe, the Favor of Heaven, any more than they did in the former in Support of fuch their unrighteous Proceeding.

But they had now attained to national Wifdom, which they had acquired in the School of dearly purchafed Experience.

The Troubles which broke out in the Reign of *Charles the First*, and which were a long Time previous to his Reign engendering ; had their Beginning principally in the exceffive Pride and Self-Sufficiency both of Prince and People ; and in their extreme Forgetfulnefs of fingular public Mercies, and very eminent national Bleffings.

Now thefe Troubles being the Effect of Divine Juftice on the Nation in General for national Tranfgreffions ; it was meet that Juftice fhould be alike inflicted on both Sides : as well on the Prince as on the People.



*Charles the First*, a conscientious but very bigoted Man, was extremely well-fitted to perfect that Stroke of Judgment on a sinful Nation.

In the Course of that national Conflict, Opportunities presented, which had they been wisely improved, might have healed the grievous Breaches on both Sides; and reconciling the different political Interests, have fixed them on so permanent a Basis, and in so just an Equilibrium, that a System of Government might have been presented to the World, exhibiting a Paragon of peerless Excellence; salutary to the Interest of this Country in particular, as well as to the general Interest and Improvement of Mankind.

But Power acquired by unhallowed Pretensions, can never be exercised to the Party's Advantage.

Yet this is precisely the Sort of Power these modern Imposers on the Credulity of Mankind so eagerly grasp at, and so impassionately recommend.

Did England ever prosper under Usurpation? Let her History be consulted. Do these Men by the false Glosses they put upon Things, and their artful Distinctions, hope to delude and draw her into their Snares? Her good Sense, which necessarily emanates from her liberal Constitution, will save her from the Wiles of their crafty Devices.

But how acquired she that excellent Constitution, which proves her Bulwark of Defence against the Machinations of both her foreign and domestic Foes?

By a strict Adherence to the Rules of Equity.

Surprized as she once was, when unhappily engaged in a political Struggle, to which in the first

Instance she had been justly provoked ; surprized, I say, as she once was, by a canting Tribe of pragmatical Hypocrites, into Measures totally incongruous to the general Tone of her national Temper, she learnt by bitter Experience the sad Effects of a Departure from Justice : insomuch that when recovered from her fatal Delusion, so deep was the Impression of her Fears, least haply she might be drawn out of her Bias, and driven again to a mischievous Extreme ; that from very Excess of Precaution she threw too great a Weight into the regal Scale.

But Extremes of either Side are dangerous. Fresh Experience served to rectify her Error, and perfect her Judgment.

It was reserved for the noble Assertors of real Liberty at the memorable Period of the *Glorious Revolution*, to fix the Poise of a stable and generous Freedom.

Do the democratical Enthusiasts enquire, Why did she not at this Time, when so favorable an Opportunity offered, why did she not proceed further ; and to prevent the Possibility of further Encroachments and regal Usurpations, why did she not, as the French Nation has done, totally abolish the regal Office ?

Had the Nation been faulty at this Time, she undoubtedly would have taken such a Step : and her Rashness would inevitably have involved her wretched and condign Punishment. But reverencing herself, she had learnt to respect the Rights of Individuals ; above all she had learnt to respect the Ordinances

Ordinances of God. Her Religion instructed her that the Powers in Being existed by the Appointment of God; and her Reason taught her that her Right extended not to the Subversion but to the Improvement of those Powers.

But let us suppose a Case, wherein a just Nation might with Propriety, and consequently with Safety and Advantage, totally change and alter the Nature and Form of her Government : for Example. Suppose the English Nation previous to the Time of the celebrated Revolution in her Government, had from a Sense of Experience been brought to the Conviction, that her Constitution was not only defective in the regal Part, but that the whole System was altogether bad, and injurious to the general Welfare of the People; and that the republican Form was to be preferred as containing in it far superior Advantages, contributory to the general Interest of the Community ; suppose this Conviction to have operated strongly on the public Mind previous to the Revolution : in such a Case, the Nation finding herself at the Time of the King's Abdication, to be luckily relieved from the Burden of the regal Branch, would of her own Accord, and without any Solicitation on the Part of the Convention, have authorized them to model a Frame of Government after the most perfect of the democratic Kind : and the Convention actuated by the like public-spirited and just Principle with the People at large, preferring the public Weal to their own private Convenience, would have earnestly set themselves to the Work, comporting their Conduct therein agreeable to the most perfect Rules of Equity.

The

The Convention being thus impowered by the Nation to frame a System of Government, and being in the Interim invested with full and ample Power to execute the Function of Government themselves; having maturely digested and modelled their Plan, would next from the Dictates of Justice and Policy submit it to the Scrutiny and Revision of the People at large in their several corporate and collective Bodies : this being done and the Plan after Revision, generally approved of and assented to, the Convention sustaining its Character of a just, disinterested, and public-spirited Body, would next proceed to make Provision for indemnifying all such who might sustain Detriment from this new Arrangement of Things ; taking the utmost Care that the Provision of this Indemnification be ample and well-secured ; before they resigned their Function and dissolved themselves, by enacting this momentous, supreme, and fundamental Law.

Thus would the most consummate Justice and Liberality have pervaded the Conduct both of the Nation and its Representative.

Now let us turn our Eye to *France*.

Never had a People a more advantageous Opportunity of improving and establishing the Constitution of their Government upon the best Principle of pure Liberty and public Utility than the French Nation has had.

Not driven to the Necessity of making Use of the constrained Abdication of their Sovereign as an Expedient for effecting a political Reform ; a Measure, which though the English Nation found

it absolutely necessary to take ; and which, had she not taken, by her inconsiderately slighting the only right Means which offered for the Conservation of her Rights and Liberties, she would have forfeited her Claim to the Character of just and brave ; a Measure, which though warranted by the strongest Necessity, yet operating on the Capriciousness and blind Prejudices of the People, it was foreseen would occasion public Animosities, Strifes and Divisions ; nevertheless as it was a Measure not originating in personal Resentment, Whim, or wild Caprice, but adopted from the pressing Demand, and on the pure Principle of immutable Justice, it has obtained the Sanction of Divine Favor in the most remarkable Degree ; the continued Prosperity and rising Greatness of the Nation since that auspicious Æra being altogether matchless and unexampled in the Annals of the World ; not driven, I say, to the Necessity of using any such Sort of harsh, coercive Measures ; there was given to the French Nation such a noble Opening for prosperously forwarding political Improvements, as is not to be equalled in the History of Mankind.

That Sovereign whom they have compelled to drink so copiously to the very Dregs of Bitterness, and to sustain so heavy a Burthen of the most pungent Woe, so far from going about to lessen the Immunities and to infringe on the Rights of his Subjects, was One, in Nothing more remarkable than in the Heartiness of his Zeal for the Enlargement of their Rights, and the Increase of their Happiness.

Convened

Convened then, as the STATES GENERAL was, by so patriotic, so benevolent a Prince, what a glorious Opportunity presented, for the Nation to adopt salutary Measures for the Public Good.

Their signal Perversion of so incomparable a Blessing affords an instructive Lesson of the utmost Importance to Mankind.

It behoves us duly to weigh, and maturely to consider, why the Thing which should have been for their Health has thus proved an Occasion of their Falling.

Could those desperate Sinners be led clearly to perceive that while they are thus busily endeavoring to subvert and destroy the Rights of Justice, they are the very Instruments which Providence is making Use of, to bring about the most perfect and universal Establishment of those Rights; from a mere Spirit of Pervicacity they would of themselves discontinue their iniquitous Proceedings.

But they are impelled by the evil Principle to whose Guidance they have madly devoted themselves.

While thus judicially blinded as they are, and intoxicated with the Greatness of Power they have been suffered through their cunning Artifices to acquire; while they are thus furiously driving on in the Career of Fraud and diabolical Deceit; 'tis Time the Friends and the Followers of *Truth*, approve their Worthiness of that Distinction, by their firm Adherence to its Dictates, and their Openness to its Conviction.

The long continued abject State of Vassalage in which the People of *France* appeared to the Rest of the Nations of *Europe*, served greatly among other Causes to palliate the Conduct of that People, at the Time they first strained the free Grant of their King into an Act of gross Usurpation.

The dreadful Consequences which have ensued from the surrounding Nations quietly suffering this unjustifiable Act to stand; and the threatening Mischiefs and imminent Dangers resulting therefrom; ought to arouse the Nations from their Torpidity; and induce them to make it a common Cause, vigorously to endeavor to bring about *a speedy Restoration of Justice* in the Earth.

Are the Nations in Dread of the over-running Scourge of *French Seduction*? Let them look well to themselves. Let them be well persuaded the Purpose of God is special in all this: that their Fears are excited, and their Apprehensions are raised, intentionally to quicken them to right Notices of Things.

The *Great Usurpation or Rebellion* in *England* occasions a dark Chasm in the English History. The progressive Improvement in the necessary Arts and Embellishments of Life, appears to be suddenly stopped; the Channels of fair Science choked up; and Learning being abruptly turned out of her regular Course, forcibly driven into an indirect, muddy, and polluted Stream.

Many of the first Leaders and Agitators of that general and grievous national Insurrection, were Men actuated, as far as it concerned their own Principles, by just Motives. Such Sort of Men

are never wanting in a State. When the Sins of a Nation become ripe for Judgment, these are the fittest Instruments to bring it on : but these are only secondary Instruments. The Malignants, who are ever plotting and planning their Schemes of Mischief, find these the ready Tools to work with. A sagacious People will readily and rightly penetrate and discern the Principles, Purposes, and Designs of both these Sorts of Persons ; and will cautiously guard against the malicious Wickedness of the One, and the enthusiastic Frenzy of the other. Now that which makes a People sagacious, is their steady Adherence to Justice. When a People ceases to adhere to the Precepts of Justice, their wonted Sagacity having forsaken them, that which in their better Temperament of Discernment they would have considered as the Effusions of mental Madness, they now listen to and imbibe as the sound Doctrine of enlightened Reason. And now do the Malignants with a high Hand play their Game ; working on this Spirit of popular Delusion till the public Mind becomes more and more infatuated, they triumph for a While in the Success of their infernal Stratagems.

In that dismal Season of public Wretchedness and national Delirium, what Extravagancies in Opinion and what monstrous Tenets were held ! Then first in these later Times, that devilish Doctrine of a proud and selfish Independence was impiously broached, openly avowed, and eagerly espoused. Nor did that signal Repulse which those Propagators of Falshood and Fomenters of Mischief experienced in the *Restoration*, abate their Malice or  
destroy



deftroy their Fraud. And we may be well affured, fo long as the Ignorance of Mankind expofes them to be beguiled by the delufive Artifices of fuch fubtil Deceivers, fo long will they be permitted by the high Sufferance of Heaven to propagate with Succels their deteftable Lies.

And herein the Wifdom of Providence is admirably feen; in that we are to be thus purged from our Errors and cured of our Ignorances: it being well obferved that thofe very Means which evil Minds employ for the Accomplifhment of their private, particular, and wicked Ends, Divine Providence delighteth much in uſing and ſanctifying to wholefome and falutary Purpoſes: thereby eſtabliſhing that Good which is diametrically oppoſite to the evil Worker's Intent.

With what grateful Senſations ought we of the Engliſh Nation and Government to contemplate the Goodneſs of God, in ſo often and ſo eminently baffling and defeating the wicked Devices and Enterprizes of both our foreign and domeſtic Foes.

The recent Evidence, that the Nation is happily awakened to theſe grateful Senſations, muſt afford the moſt exquisite Comfort and Joy to every honeſt Mind; ſince from hence we may preſage that the Favor of Heaven will be manifeſted to us in the further Enlargement of our Hearts, and the Opening our Underſtanding to know and conſider the wonderful Ways and Works of God.

To this End let us ſeriouſly reflect, and caſt in our Minds, what great and momentous Events the Providence of God has brought to paſs in our Days.

Did the Almighty for the Sins of our Nation, permit the dreadful Scourge of intestine War to rage through our Land ? And were we for a long Season involved in all the Miseries of civil Discord, party Fury, and factious Rage ? And yet after all this, did kind Providence compassionate our Sufferings, and relieve us from our Distress ? And did God in his Wisdom, after the customary Method of His Providence, sanctify that severe Dispensation, and render it signally instrumental in conferring upon us the inestimable public Benefit of a just and righteous System of Government far beyond Compare ? Then may we hope, nay, in the Fullness of Assurance confidently expect, that as to us in particular, so to Mankind in General, will the Almighty turn those terrible Visitations of His Vengeance with which we are daily alarmed, into the most merciful Manifestations of his Goodness; and render them the blessed Means of healing the broken Spirits of his Creatures with the precious Balm of Grace and Reconciliation.

January 1st, 1793. I lament much that my extreme Straitness of Time, will not permit me to enter into the Proofs and clear Elucidations of what I am about to advance : yet I trust the Almighty will so bless my Endeavors for the Enlargement of *His Truth* among Men, that some will be stirred up to prosecute the Scope of these Remarks : and consider them as the proper *Data* whereon to ground a just and happy System, equally calculated to maintain the Honor and Glory of God, and to promote the general Welfare and Happiness of Mankind.

NOTWITHSTANDING

NOTWITHSTANDING there are innumerable and irresistible Arguments to prove the Reality of Divine Government in the Regulation of the Affairs of the World; and though from a rational Survey of the Works and Operations of Nature, we must inevitably be led to conclude that the very best Means are constantly made Use of for the Accomplishment of the several Ends designed; yet weak Minds are apt on every light Occasion, especially in the Matter of the moral Government of Mankind, to arraign the Wisdom and Goodness of God: presumptuously taking upon them to scan by the Measure of their finite and shallow Comprehensions, the Ways and Works of infinite Energy and incomprehensible Perfection.

But however the Heathens of Old, or those who had the Aid and Assistance of *Divine Revelation*, to enlighten and strengthen the reasoning Faculty of their Minds, may in this Respect be held, if not altogether blameless, yet in some Degree, excusable; the Case of those who living under the Influence and Light of this *Revelation*, do yet in the Arrogancy and Pride of their selfish Conceit, go to far greater Lengths than ever the Heathens did, is widely distinct.

While the Repellers and Enemies of true Reason, by their sottish Madness, and malicious Opposition to the spreading of Real Light in the World, do clearly demonstrate their Antipathy and settled Aversion to the genuine Illumination and Happiness of Mankind, it becomes greatly incumbent on the *Lovers of Truth* to oppose to the specious *Data* of false

false Reasoning, the sure and steadfast Doctrine of infallible Revelation.

And *Revelation* is justly deemed infallible, and entitled to the Epithet, *Divine*, if on the most scrupulous Investigation of its Contents, not the most minute Part of the various and numerous Matters it contains will be found to clash ; but on the contrary, the Whole, and every Particular, may be proved to harmonize in the most perfect Unison : moreover, the Data of false Reasoning, must necessarily be acknowledged to be merely specious, if any Incongruity be proved in the Points on which it is grounded.

As a Spirit of laudable Zeal is now seen to be excited among us, and as Associations are formed for the express Purpose of withstanding the wicked Intriguers and confuting the vile Doctrines of the present Times ; permit me earnestly to recommend to those who truly value the Honor of their *Christian Profession*, who would really prove themselves to be Lovers of their Country, and Friends to Virtue ; who wish with Sincerity to see an End put to the dreadful Devastations of levelling Fanaticism ; and who reflecting that *Truth* is ashamed of Nothing but to be hid ; and that though the *Truth* is not to be disclosed at all Times, nor Pearls to be cast before Swine ; yet considering the present State of Mankind, and observing the frightful Strides of *Deism* and *Infidelity*, are anxious for the Honor of God's *Word* to Man : let me earnestly recommend to Such, as the best and only Means of combating, refuting, and silencing the wicked and antichristian

Tenets

Tenets of these Times, to consider the Expediency of immediately adopting that Proposition I formerly made; namely, That a Number of learned Men of all Denominations, Christians and Infidels, should under the Sanction and Authority of Government be formed into a Society, for the express Purpose of making a liberal and universal Enquiry into the Authenticity of the Scriptures: not to be influenced by popular Prejudices; but on the Supposition of their being an Imposition on the Credulity of Mankind, to prosecute a free and manly Disquisition. To this, I may further add another Proposition; namely, that besides the Society for an Examination (historical, philosophical, and theological) into the Truth and Evidence of *Revelation*; a Society be likewise formed under the Auspices and public Patronage of Government, for the Collection of genuine Materials for the Formation and Composition of *an universal History of Mankind* from the remotest Antiquity: that it be a centenary History, or History of Ages; giving a comparative View from Age to Age, of public Manners and Transactions: that the Rise and Progress of Society be particularly noticed: the Origin of remarkable Customs traced out: and in short, a clear, distinct, and rational History of the World be composed. The Result of the Labors of two such Societies would be coadjutory to each other: and would cause such an Influx of real Light in the World, as would necessarily dispel the Clouds of Ignorance, and weaken the Effects of devilish Deception.

We must not expect supernatural Assistance: or  
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look for God to work a Miracle in this advanced Period of Time, in defence of that *Revelation* which only requires the Exercise of our rational Faculties, to convince us it has a just Claim to our Belief in its *Divine Inspiration*.

Nor shall we by our Slackness in the Exercise of those Means which Providence lays before us, approve ourselves deserving that *favoured Distinction* we bear in the World : but may through our Unprofitableness in the Service of God's *Truth*, provoke the Almighty to extinguish that Light we at present enjoy.

As that dark Cloud which for so long a Season overshadowed the Christian World during the general Prevalency of popish Ignorance, was occasioned principally by the Suppression of the Study of the *Scriptures* ; but was greatly dissipated on the Revival of *Scripture Knowledge* ; yet so, that the Light hitherto derived from hence, is comparatively but a faint Gleam or Dawn, in Respect to that bright Effulgence which will hereafter shine forth and irradiate the Christian Church : so most assuredly would such a general, publicly-sanctioned, and scrupulous Enquiry into the Evidence of scriptural Divine Authority, not only dissipate those Clouds of Ignorance with which we are at present encompassed ; but totally mastering the false, yet subtil Arguments of *Infidelity*, cause the Light of the Glorious *Truth* of God to shine forth and gladden the Face of Nature : and turning the Hearts of the Children of Men to cultivate the Ways of *Virtue*, would accelerate the Approach of that happy Period

# riod THE BLESSED MILLENNIUM, THE REIGN OF JUSTICE.

Let us consider, We are loudly called to turn our Attention to the Works of God.

Those who are conversant in the Methods and Ways of Providence, must clearly see that the present Time is the Eve of great and signal Changes in the State and Condition of Things on the Earth.

While the evil Spirits who work in the Children of Disobedience, by their ruthless Maxims are terrifying those, who, ignorant of the Designs of Providence, have a long Time rested on their Lees, and lulled themselves in an evil Security, *The Taught of God* do greatly console themselves, in full Expectation that the Day of Deliverance is nearly at Hand: and that God will speedily arise and execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth.

Is it so that a great Nation in the Midst of Christendom, heretofore deemed a chief Pillar in the Christian Church, is suddenly and totally fallen off from her Profession; and having given up herself to an utter Dereliction of her former religious Profession, is at this Moment openly avowing, and by every subtil Device busily propagating the most abominable antichristian Doctrine, far and near; it behoves us wisely to consider the Cause of this: and we shall find that as an Individual, who endued with great natural Faculties, yet finding the Ways of *Truth* are quite contrary to his own perverse and evil Ways; in the Pride and Stubbornness of his Heart, stifling the Emotions of his Conscience, and willfully  

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rebelling against the Light of his Mind, after long Provocation, is judicially given up to a reprobate Course; just so, is the righteous Judgment of God inflicted on a sinful Nation. Now whenever an Individual or a Nation is in that fearful and dismal State of Reprobation, we may rightly interpret their Language, and understand the Import and Meaning of their Words.

The Language of these evil Men in the present Day, these wicked Scoffers, whose detestable Doctrines, Providence has suffered by Way of an admonitory Visitation, to be so widely diffused in the World, is plain and obvious. It may be clearly perceived to be *the Doctrine of Devils*; and the extreme Eagerness its deluded Devotees demonstrate in their Endeavours for its Propagation, may be interpreted to be a providential Call for a *General Reformation*.

Do these pretended Reformers, blasphemously ascribe to the Nation, the Power of God? The Nation, say they, is essentially the Source of all Sovereignty. The sincere Followers of God then are called upon to express their Abhorrence of this abominable Impiety. Do they persecute Kings, the Ministers of God, and with opprobrious Scorn and bitter Acrimony decry the regal Office? Then are the Kings and Rulers of the Earth loudly excited as by the Voice of God, to consider well their Ways, and by well-doing in the conscientious Discharge of their honourable Functions, to put to Silence the Ignorance of these foolish Men. Do they revile the Nobility? Are  
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the Clergy despised? In short, is every Order and Institution originally formed for the Good of Society, traduced and ignominiously proscribed? Let them attend then to the Warning and profit by Advice. Remedy Abuses, and rectify Errors. But in so doing, be sure to exercise a right Judgment. The least Departure from Justice, especially in the Matter of Public Reforms, is a Circumstance more deeply to be dreaded than all the existing Evils arising in established Institutions from the natural Rust and Decay of Time.

Are the Friends of true Reformation, by viewing the present dreadful Disorders and accumulated Miseries of *France*, are they deterred from the Prosecution of their generous Designs? Let them resolve to be rigidly just, and the God of *Justice* will enable them prosperously to accomplish their End.

Remember, *France*, by her grievous *Injustice*, has brought upon herself her present Calamities; neither will she be restored to national Happiness, till she becomes sensible of her Enormities, and sincerely repents of her Sins.

I congratulate my Country, that the happy Period is arrived, in which she is seen triumphantly to rise in all the Glory of her sterling Majesty, and to adopt a Language answerable to her real Dignity: that Dignity which is necessarily attached to her matchless Constitution; that Constitution which Providence has secured to her as the Reward of her national Justice.

While the Partizans of *Injustice* and the vile Propagators of *Fraud*, are silyly endeavouring underhand to thwart her upright Views, it behoves her to act with Wariness and great Circumspection.

Beware of being duped by the fine-spun Arguments of *Pseudo-Reformers*: and on the other Hand, beware of a Wretchedness of Temper and Lack of Attention to laudable Improvement. Great are the Calls for *Universal Reformation*. But no Change of Circumstances is entitled to the Name of *Reformation*, which does not exalt the Glory of God, and meliorate the State and Condition of Man: and that, not of Man, merely in a collective Point of View, but of Man individually. For to talk of a *Reformation*, wherein some must be Sufferers for the supposed Benefit of others, is at best, but an idle Fancy: witness the recent Example of *France*. If the objectionable Institutions of Society cannot be mended without the Prejudice of some particular Individuals, then, it is clear, those Institutions, though naturally imperfect, are yet in the present Condition of Things, the best that can be; and it is best they should so remain, till every Individual be brought freely to concur in some well digested Plan of real Reformation.

As the best Means of prosperously effecting internal Reforms, let us wisely consider the Aspect and Condition of the Times. For, if *Christ* severely rebuked the Men of that Day, because they knew not the Signs of those Times; how much more deserving of Censure are we, if we stupidly and unprofitably let the Signs of our Times pass by through Neglect.

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That a Time in the Issues of God's Providence will come, when Nation will no longer fight against Nation, neither will they learn War any more, is a Matter clearly foretold. If we rightly consider the Events of our Day, it must appear evident that Circumstances are now ripening to that End.

Since the World began, it never has occurred till now, that a Number of great and mighty Nations of the Earth, from coincident Events have been brought to such a Pass, as to be forced to consider it their prime Object and best Interest mutually to support each other in their respective natural and just Rights.

The Circumstance of two or more Nations in the old Heathen or in the Christian World, joining together in a close Alliance upon some particular Occasion, bears no Comparison to the present Case.

Here, all the States and Nations of Christendom, have one common Cause, against a common Enemy; the Reproacher, and open Abuser of that holy Name by which they all are called.

Nor is it merely an outward Foe with whom they have to contest. Till *Christianity* becomes perfectly understood, till its Divine Precepts are adhered to, and its Injunctions obeyed, the most formidable Foe will be found lurking within.

The Outrages and abominable Excesses of the *French Faction* have conspired to open the Eyes of the Generality of Mankind: they clearly perceive their temporal Interest to be deeply concerned: and they are enforced from the Motive of Self-Preservation, to devise proper Means for the Quelling  
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and Crushing the natural Effects of this threatening and wide-spreading Contagion.

This truly is a great Revolution. Herein the Hand of Providence may be clearly seen. And that the Benefits of this blessed Change may be happily extended throughout the Earth, even to the *Conviction* and *Conversion* of those who by their judicial Blindness have been instrumental in bringing it about, let the Rulers and Governors of *Christendom* be persuaded to heed this Advice.

'Tis Time that Wars between Nations agreeing together in the general Principles of the same Religion should cease. No considerable Meliorations in the State of Society will be effected, till Nations adopt a *General Plan* for the amicable Settlement of controversial Points; and the fair Arrangement on equitable Principles, of Affairs between State and State.

To this End, Let the Rulers of the lawful Governments of *Christendom*, (and those Governments alone ought to be esteemed lawful, which having been generally acquiesced in and submitted to by their respective Subjects, are warranted by the Word of God) let the respective lawful Rulers of *Christendom*, I say, wisely improving the Circumstances of the present Times, heeding the Calls of Providence, and desirous to contribute their Aid, happily to settle the Differences of Nations, and to remove the Ground of War; let them agree upon the Establishment of A GENERAL COURT OF REPRESENTATIVES; the Object of whose Institution should be, To revise the Laws of Nations,

tions, and to establish Regulations by common Consent, conducive to the General Peace and Welfare of Mankind.

And let it be established in the first Instance, as a necessary Preliminary, and fundamental Regulation, That Nothing be concluded on, or received as the Act of the Body Representative, but what has obtained the clear, full, and free Consent of every individual Representative.

This ought to be the Maxim or fundamental Rule of every Convention or Assembly instituted for the Purpose and Work of Reformation.

Would the Governors of *Christendom* be persuaded to this, would they with a becoming Christian Spirit embrace the happy Opportunity of uniting together for the blessed Purpose of extinguishing Animosities, and removing the Cause of Wars, the God of Peace would bless their Councils, and enable them prosperously to accomplish their Views.

Let the Nations be warned. A War of Fanaticism is above all Things to be deprecated. A General Court of Representatives of the several legitimate Powers, empowered with Authority freely to discuss and settle the Points of Controversy between Nation and Nation, would prove the salutary Means of preventing so dreadful a Mischief.

From the splendid Influence of so bright an Example, and encouraged by the Prospect of a *General and Permanent Peace*, the Nations would be led to prosecute with Energy, internal Reforms.

Can we without reverent and grateful Sensations, behold the wonderful Workings of the Providence  
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of God ? Are we deaf to the Voice of Heaven ? And do we remain indifferent to co-operate in its Designs ? Do the infernal Spirits who work in the Children of Disobedience, openly upbraid us with our Continuance of Wars ? We may be assured they are the unwilling Heralds of Heaven, proclaiming to us its high Behests. Have the Revolters from Reason denounced Vengeance against All those who will not espouse their mad Doctrine of perverted Ideas ? Have they proscribed the privileged Orders of Society, and taking Advantage of the Schisms and Divisions among Christians, (which yet the Scriptures have expressly foretold) have they openly, proudly, and blasphemously decried the Doctrine, and despised the Word of the living God ? Then are we called to prove our Attachment to Reason, and our excellent Proficiency therein, by opposing to these senseless Fanatics, the sober Convictions of rational Revelation.

At present we are lamentably deficient in Scripture Knowledge. The Professors of the Gospel, in general are wofully ignorant therein. Both Priest and People are unacquainted with the true Knowledge and Practice of their Profession. Hence they are easily beguiled through the Sleight of Men, and turned aside with every Wind of Doctrine. Yet this is so far from being an Argument against the Truth of *Christianity*, that it stands a sure Proof and Evidence of its Divine Reality.

A rational Scrutiny, such as might be expected from a liberal Society, authorized by the public Sanction, into the Grounds of the Doctrine of  
*Christianity*

*Christianity*, as it is contained in the Writings of the sacred Scriptures, is an Object which the Times loudly call for. Such an Enquiry would render an Appeal *To the Law and the Testimony*, efficacious for the Conviction of the Scoffers and Gain-sayers. It would be the happy Means of magnifying the *Law*, and making it honorable.

The Birth of *Time* and its limited Duration ; the Origin and History of *Nature* ; the Creation, Fall, and Redemption of *Man* ; the revealed Notice of the *Deity* and His Attributes ; His various Dispensations to the Children of Men ; the History of *Prophecy*, and the Accomplishment of its Predictions ; the Types of the *Messiah* ; the Incarnation, human Life, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God, and Saviour of Mankind ; the History of the *Jews*, and of the ancient *Great Monarchies* of the World ; the Account of *Idolatry* ; and of the Rise, Propagation, and Establishment of *Christianity* ; the Foretelling of *Gross Corruptions* that would be permitted to obtain, both in its Doctrine and Discipline ; the Account of *Antichrist*, his Rise, Progress, and expected Fall ; the *Sabbatical Rest* decreed to the Church of Christ during the blessed Period of the *Millennium* ; the signal Marks and Notices by which we may be assured of its near Approach ; the Completion of the *Mystery of God* in the *glorious Consummation* of all Things ; all these, and more, are Subjects, the right Understanding of which, is of infinite Importance as to the Welfare and Happiness of Mankind.

Is any one so unskilful in the Knowledge of the Signs of the Times, the Notices of Nature, and

the Intelligences of Providence, as not to perceive that the Reign of *Justice* advances near? What though the Ungodly are outrageous, What though they storm and menace, though they overrun the Earth with their Wickedness; thus saith the Psalmist in the Spirit of Prophecy, *When the Ungodly are green as the Grass, they shall be suddenly cut off.* They are even now ripe for Destruction, and their enormous Iniquities will hasten their Fall.

*French Liberty and Equality*, the Bubble that has set the World all a-gaze, like their other fantastic and unprofitable Invention of the *Air Balloon*, will be found to die away like Smoke, and to evaporate in Fume: yet still it may be considered the Harbinger of that perfect *Freedom* and that *Oneness* in Christ, which will be happily enjoyed in succeeding Times.

Moreover, the World has been recently set a wondering at the Prodigies of *Animal Magnetism*. How much has it been talked of, how little understood! The Pretenders to Knowledge in this new Science, as it is called, exactly resemble the false *Gnostics* in the primitive Christian Times. Like them, these also have stolen Fire from off the Altar, as *Nadab* and *Abihu* did.

As the Sons of *Sceva* the *Jew*, who without License from the Holy Spirit, took upon them in a surreptitious Way, to adjure the Demoniac by the Name of *Jesus*, after the Manner of the Apostle *Paul*, as these Men, I say, though put to Confusion for their fraudulent Temerity, were yet instrumental in procuring Credence to the Truth: so  
will



will these modern Workers of Signs and Wonders prepare the Minds of Mankind rightly to apprehend the Ground of that inestimable Privilege promised to the Children of God : *They shall lay Hands on the Sick, and they shall recover.* This was verified partially, in the primitive Times of the Christian Church ; but in the Days of the *glorious Millennium*, when the Divine SHECHINAH shall descend to tabernacle with the Sons of Men, it will then be completely enjoyed by the privileged Saints of God.

But how little is the Nature of the *Millennium* understood ! Though expressly foretold, and clearly revealed, though all the Workings of Nature have a Tendency thereto ; yet Mankind appear totally dark with Respect to the right Apprehension of this ; and so they must necessarily remain, till the Key to the allegorical Phrase of Scripture becomes generally known.

*It is the Glory of God to conceal a Thing ; but the Honour of Kings is to search out a Matter.* Honourable indeed would it be to this enlightened Nation and her Government, to be occupied in searching, with reverential Awe, into the deep Mysteries of God.

As the noble *Bereans* were highly commended for their Docility and Attention, and withal for the Scrupulosity of their Enquiries, whether the Things propounded by the *Apostles* were true ; so should we, as a People, be entitled to great Commendation, would we but set Ourselves, from a pure Zeal for the *Truth*, to institute the Means of reasonable Examination.

The general Expectancy of considerable Changes and Revolutions in the World; is a Sign that the *Millennium*, though so little understood, is yet near at Hand.

When the *Fullness of Time* for the Incarnation of the Messiah was come, it is well known there was a great Expectation, even among the Heathen Nations, of the Advent of some considerable Personage: the true Character of the Messiah had been all along misunderstood by the *Jews*; nay, during the Time of his Pilgrimage on Earth, erroneous Conceptions were formed of him, even by the *Apostles* themselves: just so, the true Character of the *Millennium* has been hitherto by *Christians*, misunderstood: and the most erroneous Ideas concerning it, are prevalent in the present Day. The Followers of *Emmanuel Swedenburgh* with Respect to the *Millennium*, bear a striking Comparison to those false Christs who made their Appearance about the Period of the true Messiah's Incarnation.

The Knowledge of true Religion, at this Time, is at a very low Ebb in the World. Many are the Pretenders to Gospel-Sincerity: Lo! Here is Christ, says One, and Lo! says Another, He is there. Was there but an Abolition of War, the State of Things would quickly change. Nations finding themselves delivered from this grievous Scourge, would be generally incited to devise Means for the Enlargement of useful Knowledge; the Consequence of which would be highly favourable to the Cause of *Christianity*. The Bickerings that have hitherto subsisted among the different Denominations

Denominations of *Christians*, would quickly subside. It would be known and acknowledged, that however objectionable to the shallow Comprehension of Man, the State of Things from the Commencement of Time has been, it had been all along regulated by the Direction of a wise Providence.

To blame our Ancestors, and to arraign their Wisdom and Judgment, for the apparent Inconveniences resulting from their civil Establishments, argues in us the grossest Ignorance and Pride. If they acted up to the Measure of their Discernment, and according to the Means they possessed, we ought to revere and to imitate the Example they have set. Both they, and ourselves, are only blamable, as far as it concerns the Neglect of Improvement of our respective Means.

The Characteristic of the Men of this Generation, is a Contempt of Antiquity, and a Disregard for the Welfare of Posterity. A narrow Selfishness is a Disposition despicable in an Individual; how deserving of Reproach then, is such a Temper in a People. Let us beware, our Ancestors rise not up in Judgment against us, for our wanton Derisions, our wilful Negligence, Stubbornness, and Pride.

There never was since the Beginning of the World, a more favourable Opportunity than that which the present Time affords, of adopting a Plan for the total Extinction of War. We must be weak indeed, to apprehend that any Plan will so operate, as to have the immediate Effect of universally putting a Stop to War. Such an  
Expectation

Expectation is absurd ; and betrays great Ignorance in the Nature and Course of Things. But without a Beginning there can be no End. If the Christian Rulers of the World would honorably combine together, with a becoming Zeal, for the general Promotion and lasting Establishment of *Peace* ; from such a promising Beginning, the Almighty would undoubtedly give them Cause to rejoice in the End.

Shall *England* by rashly precipitating herself into a State of intemperate Hostility, shall *England*, I say, sully her Glory and tarnish her Renown, by unadvisedly engaging in War with a Set of mad Desperadoes ? Ought she not rather to prefer the Policy of seeking the Means of obtaining *a speedy and general Pacification* ? Her Tone of indignant Disapprobation of those vile Proceedings of the abominable *Faction* of *France*, is truly becoming. But let her take heed her Zeal betrays her into no Measure of hasty Imprudence. What is she to gain by War ? 'Tis wise to be timely prepared for the worst Events ; and to negotiate for Peace with Arms in our Hands. But let us consider, the State of Affairs are changed. The *Faction* of *France*, has tended to cure that Nation of her egregious Vanity. *France* is deeply humbled. Her own Sons have done more to bring her to a right Recollection, than all the World could have done besides. Let *England* embrace the happy Opportunity, and be foremost in administering Comfort to the stricken with Grief. How gloriously has the Spirit of her religious Profession shone forth

forth in her administering Relief to her very Enemies in Distress ! Could the *French Emigrants* expect to receive such friendly Relief in their grievous Necessity, from a People who had experienced from their Nation, such rancorous Enmity, and flagrant Injustice ? But herein we demonstrated our Attachment to the blessed Precepts of the glorious Gospel. Let us proceed in the happy Temper of this truly Christian Spirit, and aspire to the amiable and worthy Distinction of being *the Pacifists of Mankind*.

To this End, I humbly propose, that it be solemnly moved on the Part of *England*, and publicly proclaimed ; that, Whereas it appears from the general Experience of Ages, that the greatest Obstacle to the Promotion of the Civilization and Happiness of Mankind, is WAR ; and whereas it appears that the partial Treaties which Nations have entered into with each other, from Time to Time, are altogether inadequate to the Prevention of this grievous, long-continued, and much to be lamented Evil, in Order as much as may be, to put a Stop to the further Ravages of this dreadful Plague, this bitter Enemy to the Improvement of Mankind, it is earnestly recommended to the Governments of those Nations who are friendly to Peace ; and who reckon their Glory in providing the best Means for the Establishment of the Happiness and Security of their Subjects ; to enter into mutual Agreement for the express Purpose of devising Means for the Establishment of a Plan of *General Accommodation* ; whereby all the possible

Cases

Cases of Controversy between Nation and Nation may be fairly, amicably, and honorably adjusted without having Recourse to the savage Expedient of Hostilities.

Honourable and happy would it be for *England* to take the Lead in so glorious an Undertaking: and to render it successful, the Grounds and Motives for attempting to form such an Engagement of Union at this particular Period of Time, ought to be clearly and explicitly made known.

It should be openly declared, ‘ That Whereas it was notorious the People of *France* had for a long Time been subjected to an arbitrary and despotic Form of Government; the surrounding Nations wishing well to the Cause of *real Liberty*, and possessed of the Idea that it would become triumphant in *France*, from the Conviction that her King was a warm Advocate and zealous Friend thereto; interesting themselves in her Happiness and Prosperity, they had studiously avoided interfering in her private Concerns; hoping the French People would avail themselves of the peaceable Disposition of their Neighbours, and happily adopt equitable Measures for the Enlargement of their internal Liberty, Security, and Peace.’

‘ But observing with infinite Regret, that a *Faction* of lawless, evilminded, and desperate Deceivers, had gotten the upper Hand; and by wicked Arts had weaned the People from a right Sense of their Duty, and instigated them to perpetrate the dreadfulest Crimes; pitying the Miseries of *France*, and called upon by a Sense of Equity, to insist on  
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a just Retribution in Cases wherein this deluded People by their atrocious Leaders had been drawn to violate the known and established Rules of Justice ; disclaiming the Right of dictating to them as a Nation, in the Matter of their internal Politics ; openly acknowledging it to be the indefeasible Right of every People, to alter, amend, and regulate, the several Institutions of their political Establishment, provided a sacred Regard be paid to immutable Justice ; some of them had taken up Arms in Behalf of those unhappy Sufferers, the Victims of lawless and implacable Vengeance.

‘ But the Leaders of that besotted People, aware that their sinister Practices would never be able to stand the Test of *Truth* ; casting off all Sense of Honor, Shame, and Remorse ; totally abandoning themselves to a desperate Course of Sinning ; having devised a diabolical Scheme, tending to take the most illiberal Advantage of the Weakness, Ignorance, and Simplicity of Mankind ; deluding People from their Duty, both to God and the Laws of their Country ; perverting their Ideas, darkening their Minds, and rendering them unfit for the Performance of either their public and general, or social and private Duties ; moved at the alarming and destructive Tendency of their artful, wicked, and nefarious Attempts ; moreover called upon and excited by every Sense and Tie of Duty, to make Head against and withstand the wicked Enterprizes of these seditious Disturbers and sworn Enemies to the Peace of Mankind ; the several Nations friendly to *Justice*, considering they

are peculiarly called upon at the present Time, to express their Abhorrence of the foul Proceedings of the *French Faction* ; and to adopt the most effectual Measures for preventing their respective People being deluded by their Artifices ; have entered into a *solemn Engagement* to support each other in their respective just Rights and Immunities : at the same Time, openly declaring, that the Ground of their *General Confederation* is in no Respect hostile to the People of *France*, or to the Rest of the Nations of Mankind : that with Respect to the French Nation having long beheld her internal Feuds and miserable Distractions, commiserating her doleful Calamities, they shall greatly rejoice in finding a Regard for *Justice* spring up and predominate within her : but conceiving they have no Right, they will not meddle with her internal Concerns : but merely insist on a Restitution of such Places to their lawful Governments which the *Faction* have fraudulently and forcibly wrested from the rightful Possessors.

What a Blessing might be expected from such a public Declaration, seconded by a *General Association* of Potentates, for the glorious Purpose of effecting the Establishment of *Justice* in the Earth ! This would be a sure and certain Ground-Work for real Reformation.

Let us believe we are loudly called to this. A *General Accommodation* of Christian Potentates would be the happy Forerunner of a *General Accommodation* of Christian Believers of all Denominations.

The Providence of God for wise and good Reasons has suffered Dissensions hitherto to spring up  
and



and to grow in the Christian Church; that the Christian Religion, like Gold, purified seven Times in the Furnace, may at length produce its superlative Excellence.

It would not be difficult to shew the natural Causes that have occasioned Differences and Divisions to prevail among Christians: nor yet to point out the Rise, Growth, and Continuance of those various Corruptions, both in its Doctrine and Discipline, that have tended to split them into divers Parties, Sects, and Denominations.

Many devout and good People, contemplating the present dismal Face of Things, may be apt to cry out in the Manner of *Gideon* of old, who viewing the sad Circumstances of his Time, exclaimed, *If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all His Miracles which our Fathers told us of?*

Though the Contemplation of the present Aspect of the Christian Church, does doubtless occasion many a sorrowful Pang to the devout Mind; yet we must be very little versed in the Methods of Providence, to expect that God should work Miracles in these later Times, to vindicate and support that Religion which requires Nothing further than merely natural Means, to bring about its most complete and universal Establishment.

*Christianity*, rightly understood, is the universal Religion of enlightened Nature. But ere it be rightly and generally understood, that which withholdeth, must first be removed and taken out of the Way.

Particularly to point out and elucidate what that is which withholdeth or retardeth the right Understanding of *Christianity*, and has operated from Age to Age to keep up that Degree of *Ignorance* in the World which impedes the Progress of *mental Enlargement* and *Illumination*, we must have Recourse to the *Sacred Writings*: but these Writings having been through Error, Perverseness, and malicious Wickedness, decried and vilified, and their *Divine Authority* questioned and denied: it becomes incumbent on the Friends of *Justice* and *Truth* to seek the Means of obtaining the clearest Certitude in this most momentous Point. Such a Certitude and irresistible Evidence, will be best obtained (nay, I had almost said, is only obtainable) from the united Efforts of two such Societies as have been already recommended.

We are come to a Crisis; and must no longer halt between two Opinions. *Infidelity*, with a barefaced Effrontery, avows itself. Our Language too must be open; and our Conduct resolute. We must divest Ourselves of narrow Prejudices, and throw off entirely, selfish Reserves.

*England* is called, not only to speak the Language of Justice and Discretion; but also to open and shew forth to the World, a Conduct answerable thereto.

It was right, according to the Ordination and Fore-appointment of Providence, that in the Course of Things, natural Evils and Inconveniences should subsist; and we may rightly gather the Limits of their destined Duration, from a due Consideration of admonitory Circumstances.

The Din of obstreperous Noise with which the  
World

World has been deafened about *Revolutions*, may truly be interpreted to be the Voice of God calling loudly for *universal Reformation*.

If *England* rightly heeding this powerful Call, would set herself wisely to profit from the Admonition ; she would soon be enabled effectually to silence the Clamours of *Faction* ; and to establish the Interest of *Righteousness* in the Earth.

Let *England* consider, the Cause of those Miseries which have desolated *France*, is *Irreligion*.

*France*, against her Conviction, out of pure Enmity to *England*, her Rival, had adhered to the Errors of the *Romish Church*. This narrowed her Temper, and cramped her Genius. Naturally endowed with the Faculty of Seeing, she wilfully blinded and obscured her Sight. Owing to this her shameful Predilection of *Error*, the Progress of *Reformation* was immaturely obstructed : and she is debased to that Degree, that she assumes to herself as a distinguishing Merit, and glories in the infamous Character of being the *openly avowed Revolver* against the *Truth*.

But the *Truth* is intrepid, and fearless of Attacks. It will at Length burst forth from Obscurity, and completely vanquish with the Brightness of its Rising the collected Force of all its Opponents.

The Almighty, indeed, to avenge the Cause of his slighted *Truth*, on the Men of this evil Generation, may permit the Sons of Darkness seemingly to prevail, and to prosper for a While : but he will in due Season arise, and this modern *Dagon* of *Infidelity*, shall tremble and fall before the glorious *Truth* of God.

(Thus far prior to the Murder of the French King.)

Let *England* be apprized that the present is an auspicious Season for perfecting a pure *Reformation* in the *Christian Church*: and let her be persuaded, she is specially called by the Will of Providence, to be gloriously instrumental in accomplishing this desirable Work.

O that I had Leisure, for the Edification of the *Devout*, and the Conviction of the *Gainsayers*, to bring forth the strong Evidences that may be adduced, in Confirmation, that the Subsistence of the Church of *Christ*, from the Promulgation of *Christianity*, to the present Period of Time, has been all along perfectly answerable to the Divine Designation, as it has been clearly revealed to the Sons of Men: but the united salutary Labors of two such Societies, as have been before earnestly recommended, would abundantly establish the Demonstration of this.

The natural Means of radically reforming the public Profession of Christianity, and reducing it to the Standard of Gospel-Purity, will be found to be in the adopting such Regulations as may ultimately produce, A SIMPLIFICATION OF THE MODE OF THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

To this End let *England* be moved to set forth to the World, the following Example of real Liberality.

*Fas est doceri ab hoste: quomodo potius ab amico?*

The *Ecclesiastical Convocation* has been formally and regularly convened, by Royal Mandate, at the summoning of *Parliament*, from Time to Time:

but

but for a considerable Time past, the General Assembly of the Clergy, as to the main Intent of their pristine Convention has in Effect been merely nominal. If the Power which Churchmen have been found, by surreptitious Arts, to assume and arrogate to themselves, has been grievously irritating to the Temper and Understanding of Mankind; the odious Use they have generally put it to, has been much more exceedingly so.

Though to condemn whole Bodies of Men indiscriminately, for the Vices and Excesses of particular Individuals, is altogether inequitable; and unbecoming in any, except such as the execrable JACOBINS of FRANCE; yet the different Constitutions and Governments of the *Christian Church* hitherto, have been such, as to occasion the sacerdotal Function, instead of attaching Veneration and Respect to its Character, to become the grand Object of Detestation and Derision.

To charge this to the Malignity of human Nature, would be a most egregious Mistake. The Minister of the Gospel, of whatsoever dignified Rank or Degree, who by Reason of the corrupt Constitution of the Government of the Church, may be in Capacity of lording it over God's Heritage, will be in Effect the Minister of Satan: and he who acting under a vitiated Polity, becomes thus a Reproach to his Profession, might be enabled under a just and righteous System, to attract the most honorable Regard, from his zealous Attention to the Duties of so sacred and important a Charge.

It remains then to consider, what Regulations may tend to reform the Polity of the Christian Church; and to restore to its Ministers a competent Capacity for the due Exercise of their professional Duty.

Suppose the *Parliament* was to address the Body of the Clergy in *Convocation* to this Effect.

‘ Seeing it appears that the Exercise of juridical and coercive Power in Clergymen is derogatory to the Nature of their sacred Character; and has tended not only to lessen and invalidate their Ministry in the Sight of Men, but also to counteract the Conviction of Evangelical Truth in the human Mind: and whereas it appears that Regulations are wanting for the Remedy of Abuses; and to rectify such Errors as have arisen and are naturally incident in the State and Condition of human Things: the PARLIAMENT of GREAT BRITAIN, desirous to testify their Zeal for the Honor of God, and for the Maintenance of true Religion and Virtue; strongly attached to the Cause of *Justice*, and considering it to be incompatible with the Rule of natural Equity to evil intreat Individuals of any Class or Description, for the unavoidable Inconveniences naturally resulting from the defective Constitutions of human Affairs; do recommend to the Clergy in *Convocation*, to deliberate and consult among themselves, what may be the likely Means of accelerating the Work of *Reformation*, by promoting the Cause of *true Religion*, and restoring to the sacerdotal Character that Degree of Veneration which is requisite to give  
Efficacy

Efficacy to the Work of the sacred Ministry : assuring them their Representations respecting these Matters will be received with every possible Mark of Regard and Attention.

This would be the right Beginning of a more effectual *Reformation* in the *Christian Church*, than the World hath heretofore witnessed.

Hitherto the Work of *Reformation* has usually begun in Invective, and ended in Blood : but the *Legislature* of a Country, being thus influenced by an honest Zeal for the Advancement of the *Truth* ; and soliciting the *Clergy* for their Counsel towards the Promotion of so glorious a Work ; would afford a promising Prospect of the most signal and unexampled Success.

Should the *Parliament* be moved to this, and the *Clergy* (being convinced that the present Times require a thorough and complete, and not a partial *Reformation*) be excited to deliberate with a becoming Temper, on the Measures fittest to be adopted and proposed to the *Legislature* in Answer to the parliamentary Requisition ; from a Spirit of Unanimity under the present Circumstances of the Times, we might happily preface, *an effectual and glorious Reform.*

Weak Minds have imagined, that to purify the Profession of *Christianity*, and to bring about a perfect *Reformation*, we must needs return to the precise Manners of the primitive Times ; just as those wild Theorists have supposed, that the Perfection of *Liberty* consists in reducing Mankind to the original Nakedness of Nature. Opinions

so preposterous as these, we should hardly think the Reason of Man would permit him for a Moment to entertain; nor would it, was not Satan permitted, for the Punishment of Sin, so to darken and involve in Perplexity the mental Perception, as to render it a notable Work indeed to dissipate the Mists of *Error*, and prepare the Way for the more clear Manifestation and Enlargement of the *Truth*.

Without undertaking at present to point out and explain the Causes which have operated to render the public Profession of *Christianity* what it appears to be in the present Day; it must now suffice to specify the likely Means of remedying existing Abuses: that by removing the Causes of Offence, a prosperous Opening may present, for the Establishment of Christian Purity, Felicity, and Peace.

Willingly to give up and part with Power, by whatsoever Means such Power may have been acquired, it must be confessed, is a great Exercise of Self-Denial. That enormous Assumption of temporal Power which *Clergymen* have in Times past, challenged to themselves, has for a considerable Time been more and more lessening by Degrees: and the first great Step towards reducing the Minister of the Gospel to his proper Standard, will be in his willingly and totally divesting himself of this ill-acquired, and consequently mischievous Power.

If the *Clergy*, (being impressed with the Consideration, that their being relieved from every Kind  
of



of secular Business, would be the Means of doing them the most salutary Service, by enabling them effectually to perform the Duties of their sacred Function) were to apply to *Parliament* to annul the Ecclesiastical Courts; and to grant them an Exemption from all such Offices and Charges, as are found to clash with the Performance of their ministerial Duty; this would indeed be a great Step towards retrieving that Degree of Respect and Veneration which ought always to be attached to the sacerdotal Character.

Thus far then with Respect to what are called the Spiritual Courts, (being the Relicks of antichristian Inventions;) as also, those secular Avocations which *Clergymen* have for a long Time been habituated to, to the great Reproach and Scandal of their Profession.

As to the *Hierarchy* of the *Church*, or the Constitution of Orders and Degrees, this has for a long Season been a Matter of great Controversy, Debate, and Contention.

That there have been, and are still, many great and worthy Characters, among the different Descriptions of Dissenters, would be unjust and uncharitable to deny. The first Leaders among them, for the most Part, were Men, noted for a Zeal, according to the Measure of their Knowledge, for the *Truth*. Nevertheless it would be equally unjust to conceal that among those who under the Pretext of Scruples of Conscience, respecting some Particulars, have dissented from the public Establishment of the *Church*, Monsters of Men have been and are still

to be found, who make it their Business, by every fly Device and crafty Stratagem, to fan the Flame of Contention, and add Fuel to the Fire of rancorous Animosity that so furiously burns in the *Christian Church*.

These Men, as to the *Church*, are actuated precisely by the same Views and Designs, as the Levellers are with Respect to the *State*. They both are instigated by a Spirit of luciferan Pride. Sickening at the Idea that there are Degrees both in the *Church* and in the *State*, far beyond their Reach ; they revile *Royalty*, reproach the *Nobility*, despise the *Hierarchy* of the *Church*, and speak Evil of rightly constituted *Dignities*.

But what exasperates them beyond all, is the *Union of Church and State*. This, they know full well, is the grand Remora that continually baulks and impedes their Enterprizes. Could they but once effect their Purpose, to detach the *Church* from the *State*, the Rest of their curious Scheme would follow of Course. We have a sufficient Sample of this in *France*. Those political Empirics, with abominable Duplicity, began their Career by professing the greatest Veneration for the Supreme Being : solemnly invoking the God of *Justice* to foster and sanction some of the vilest and most inequitable Proceedings that ever blackened the Character of Mankind.

Orders and Degrees, both in the *Church* and in the *State*, are agreeable to a rational Constitution of Things. Their flagrant Abuses have given a colourable Pretext to evil-minded Men to clamor  
most

most violently for their utter Extinction : and they have found it no difficult Work to bring over Multitudes of weak Reasoners to side with them in supporting their vain Arguments. But the Abuse of any Thing that is good, by no Means diminishes the Value of its right Use and Application : nay, by how much the Abuse of a Thing is greatly prejudicial, by so much would its right Use be abundantly advantageous and estimable.

May that prudent Spirit of Moderation for which our Ancestors are justly renowned, shine forth conspicuous in us their Posterity.

Though the Circumstances of Nations do in the Course of Things so widely differ the One from the Other, as to render it a Thing impracticable to reduce their respective Governments to one and the same Standard, as to Forms, Offices, and external Distinctions ; yet such is the Weight that *England* bears in the Scale of Nations, that was she to prosecute with a firm and moderate Temper, the necessary Work of *Reformation* ; the Nations would be attracted by her bright Example : and while they execrate the abominable Practices of the false Reformers, would be led to imitate the laudable Pattern of the true.

Previous to the Period when our Ancestors reformed our *Church*, and purged it from the Errors of *Romish* Superstition, and for above a Century afterwards, our civil Constitution not having attained its Growth of Maturity, was but very imperfectly understood,

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It is a Point of essential Consequence, to ascertain with the utmost Precision, the most exact Definitions of Things. What a World of Mischief has ensued, from those vague and indefinite Constructions, which Men, either through Ignorance or Craft have put upon Things !

Bad, as the World is now become, and ready to run with Greediness into every Extreme of desperate Wickedness, yet such is the Strength of Evidence in Support of the Truth of *Christianity*, which has naturally accrued from the Experience of Ages, that its Enemies are constrained for the Furtherance of their evil Designs, to attempt the mastering of the Minds of the Weak and Ignorant, by perverting the reasonable Construction of Things ; well knowing their barefaced and direct Opposition would be vigorously repelled, as an Insult to the Common Sense of Mankind.

It might be reasonably expected, that the sad, the dreadful, and unparalleled Calamities, which those abroad have unhappily brought upon themselves, by listening too implicitly to the deceitful Doctrine of their false and treacherous Guides, would operate as a powerful Warning to us : and be a strong Incentive to incline us more than ever to direct our Conduct by the pure Principles of that *Truth* which they have forsaken. But alas ! While we accuse them, we ourselves are liable to Condemnation ! How long will it be, ere we open our Eyes rightly to discern the great Things which God has done for us ? Or, discerning, shall we abuse our Advantages by having Recourse to that  
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savage Mode of Disputation, hostile Animosity, when so fair an Opening presents, for rationally confuting the vain Sophistry of false Reasoning; and exhibiting to the World the glorious Excellence of *Christian Truth*?

The *French* People, 'tis true, have rendered themselves sufficiently odious in the Sight of all Nations. But we ought to recollect that we ourselves have heretofore been in a Situation in some Degree similar.

It is wrong Policy, and great Injustice, to charge that to the Nation which is merely the Work of an upstart Faction. Let us consider our former Estate. When the genuine Spirit of our Nation was curbed and kept down by a devilish Faction, who had assumed a Consequence in the Progress of our political Dispute; their villainous Enormities they perpetrated as national Acts. We ought in Charity to suppose, that the infamous Acts of the French Demagogues are as much execrated by the Nation in General, as the abominable Proceedings of the *Cromwellian* Junto were by us.

And if so, with what Face can we pretend to be Vindicators of the *Divine Truth*, when the Trait of our present public Conduct is so diametrically opposite to its Dictates? Do we exult over a fallen and degraded Enemy? And are we eager to take Advantage of those sore and dismal Calamities which have befallen her as a Visitation of Vengeance from the Almighty? Do we act up to the Spirit of our Constitution, which is founded on the Basis of *true Religion*: or shall we, while we  
boast

boast of its Excellence, destroy its Effect? Shall we publicly avow our Purpose of waging offensive War, because we apprehend we may safely do it against an exhausted Foe? Suppose we could exterminate the *French* People; are we sure we should by that Means destroy the Spirit whereby they are influenced? Let us rather in the true Spirit of our Constitution, seek the Means of bringing them to a right Recollection; by making a just Discrimination between the *Faction* and the *Nation*. In our public Declarations respecting them, we have hitherto failed in this. But let us be mindful of our Duty; and do by them as under the like Circumstances, we should be willing they would do by us.

As Matters at present stand, it is expedient to act vigorously on the defensive. But we are not warranted, under any Circumstances, to engage in offensive War. Our liberal Constitution breathes a Spirit perfectly pacific. Unless we determine with the most scrupulous Exactness to regulate our Conduct thereby, in the present Condition of Things we shall greatly disserve the Cause we profess to espouse.

But say we, the *French* are a Race of Monsters. For their shocking Enormities the Nations should unite as in a Common Cause against them, and blot out their hated Name from under Heaven.

True, we have seen the dismal Spectacle of a People casting off their Dependance on God; and being consequently given up to the Darkness of their evil Minds. We have seen the miserable  
Effects

Effects of open Profaneness and wanton Impiety. We have seen the solemn Mockery of a Nation invoking the God of *Justice* to prosper the most outrageous and abominable Acts of Public Iniquity; and we have witnessed the terrible Display of Divine Vengeance which those desperate Sinners have justly incurred and brought down upon themselves. But if we presume from hence that we are warranted to proceed farther against them than merely to defend ourselves, against their Fury, we have made no further Proficiency in the Practice of *Christianity* than the Gentile Nations.

Let us embrace the earliest Opportunity to make a public Avowal of our settled Determination of adhering to that true Constitutional Principle of entirely abstaining from offensive War. Let us openly declare to all the World, that we are no farther a Party in the present War, than to oblige the *French* to render Satisfaction for their public Aggressions, and to confine themselves within the Limits of their proper Bounds. But let us not stop here. Let us in the true Spirit of Christian Benevolence, represent to the *French* Nation what deplorable Miseries they must necessarily entail upon themselves and their wretched Posterity, unless they revert among themselves to the Principle of natural *Justice*; by replacing their several legitimate public Functionaries, recalling the Exiles, granting Pardon and general Amnesty for past Disorders, and as much as may be alleviating the Distresses of every Class of Sufferers.

So shall we manifest to the World, that Justice and Beneficence equally flow forth, and emanate from our matchless Constitution.

Let us moreover, as a Nation zealous in promoting the Interest of Righteousness in the Earth, embrace the earliest Opportunity of making public Declaration respecting those great fundamental Truths, concerning which, in the present State of distempered Thoughts and Opinions, Mankind need the clearest and most explicit Information.

To affirm, '*The Nation is essentially the Source of all Sovereignty,*' is altogether atheistical.

Had the *French*, when they agreed to accept this, as the Basis, whereon to ground their new Order of Things; had the *French*, I say, but slightly reflected that by their Acceptance of this as a fundamental Position, they would virtually renounce every Idea of any Deity, except the combined Power of the People; bad, as they then were, and inclined to run to the utmost Length in extreme Wickedness, yet on Reflection, their Minds must have revolted against the shocking and preposterous Idea of renouncing the God of their Forefathers, and setting up the Idol of *Power without Right*, by deifying the collected Force of the Multitude.

But they were unwilling to let the *Truth* penetrate their Minds. Willingly giving themselves up to the Guidance of *Error*, they have terribly witnessed its Fallacy and Deception!

Accustomed as both they and many among ourselves have been, to hear and to repeat those unfounded Expressions, '*The Majesty of the People,*'  
'The



*'The Sovereignty of the People ;'* being strongly inclined to a factious Resistance against lawful Authority, they suffered themselves, as also those inclined to Faction with us have done, to be easily deceived into the Belief and Opinion that Omnipotence was the Property of the People's Will.

*'Whatever a whole Nation chooses to do, it has a Right to do,'* was one of the palpable Falshoods advanced by that Archisophista, *Paine* ; and even Some of the Members of the *British Parliament* have not been ashamed to adopt his impious Doctrine.

But pray consider for a Moment, who are the Persons of whom a whole Nation is composed ? Is there an Individual on the Face of the Earth, of all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, who is exempted from the common Depravity of Nature ; and who is not from the Moment of his Existence, prone to Obliquity and subject to Sin ?

Before we ascribe *Majesty, Sovereignty, and Omnipotence* to the People, we must clearly make it evident, that *perfect Equity* is also the inherent and immutable Property of the People's Will.

The just and true God, *Jehovah*, is indeed perfectly righteous in all His Ways, and holy in all His Works ; and therefore He necessarily must be, and He truly is, omnipotent : but the extreme Folly and Madness of ascribing to a Nation the Attribute of the Deity, is strongly depicted in the recent Transactions of the People of *France*. If we consider their blasphemous Taunts, and call to Remembrance the proud Boastings of the Arrogant, we shall be led

justly to exclaim, The Ungodly are entrapped in the Work of their own Hands ! How are their Purposes suddenly broken off, and their Counsels defeated ! If indeed they have counselled the Counsel of the Nation, and promulgated the National Decrees, and if the Nation be in Truth, omnipotent, how comes it to pass that an Obstacle hath thwarted the national Designs ? The Lord *Jehovah*, the righteous God whom they have despised, hath looked down from Heaven, and beheld their Works. The Lord hath observed their impious Deeds ; and hath justly caused them to become a Hissing and Reproach among all the Nations that are round about them :

To affirm then, that the Nation is essentially the Source of all Sovereignty, is to deny the true and living God, and to put the Nation in the Place of God : moreover, to say, that whatever a whole Nation chooses to do, it has a Right to do, is impious and absurd ; because it is ascribing to a Nation the peculiar Property of the Deity. Of the true God alone it is rightly said, ‘ Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doeth He, in Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath, and among the Children of Men. But so far from a Nation having a Right to do whatever it chooses to do, that Right belongs not even to the whole Assemblage of all created Beings throughout the wide Extent of the Universe.

The Leaders of that deluded People have caused them to err, and Multitudes of those who have been led by them are already destroyed.

Many very considerable Matters greatly needed  
Reformation.

Reformation in *France*. But her pretended Reformers setting out with the determined Purpose to make the Work of Reformation a gainful Trade to themselves; in the Prosecution of such their Design, found themselves constrained (in order to screen their selfish Purpose from public Detection) to adopt a System (if it may be called a System) of illusive Terms. Thus, for Example; The Term *Revolution*, hath been heretofore given to political Reformation; wherein some remarkable Change respecting the Functionaries of the Government hath been brought about: as that political Reformation in the English Government in the Year 1688 is called the *English Revolution*; and which having been effected on just Grounds, and in an equitable Manner, has proved so prosperous a Revolution, that it has attached no small Degree of Estimation to the very Term itself; these Men therefore availing themselves of the favorable Acceptation of that Term, (though aware that *their* Measures proceeded from a quite opposite Principle) had the knavish Subtilty to denominate, a total Subversion, and a partial Change, by one and the same Appellation.

Had the Multitude of their Followers but duly considered, that whenever A TOTAL OVERTURNING in either the civil, or the natural World, is brought about; an immediate and general Punishment to the utmost Extent of such Subversion, is not only intended, but is ever found to take the fullest Effect: they might easily have seen through the plausible Device of adopting a Sameness of Terms,

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The modern French Acceptation then of the Term *Revolution*, is, *A total Subversion*, that is, a turning of Things entirely topsy-turvy: which is a Thing as much to be dreaded as the Devastations of a terrible Hurricane, or a devouring Earthquake.

But if the French Demagogues have had the Address to make their deluded Followers suppose that the Work they have effected of overturning the ancient Government of *France*, is of a similar Nature, and withal equally as justifiable and meritorious, as that *Revolution* which in *England* is so justly celebrated and extolled; they have no less succeeded in the Meaning they have given to the Term, *Despot*.

A *Despot*, properly signifies, a Ruler, who governs, not by established Laws made by Others, and independant of his Will; but who makes his own particular Will the sole Measure and Rule of his Authority.

According to this Definition, it would be hard to find a Despot in *Christendom*. 'Tis true, the latter Kings of *France* have assumed a Sort of despotic Sway over their Subjects. But if an eminent Example be wanting, to shew the World what real Despotism is, the present Despots in *France* will afford an Example far beyond all Parallel.

With the most shameless Impudence, they have represented the several existing Governments, which have been long sanctioned and established by the General Consent of their respective People, as so many Seats of Despotism: and have taught their miserable Devotees to consider it a Work of transcendant

scendant Merit, even to force the Nations (if they should be found to be disinclined) to throw off what they term, 'their old tyrannical Yokes,' and to embrace the Proffer of *French Confraternity*; by adopting a Constitution on the curious Plan of *Gallic Liberty and Equality*.

But who can refrain from the most pointed Indignation at such heretofore unheard of tyrannical Proceedings? And yet our Indignation can scarce keep Pace with the strong Ridicule which their puerile Conduct excites.

Happy for us! We have under Providence a strong Bulwark of Defence, against every Species of hostile Attack.

When we reflect on the defective regal Government of *France*, and consider how much her late patriotic King needed such salutary Checks as our excellent Constitution affords, to support him in his wellmeant Endeavors for his People's Good; we cannot but be sensibly affected; and express our thankful Acknowledgments to the Great Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift: for, under Heaven, we eminently owe to our admirable Constitution, that we are not overwhelmed and ruined through the Fanaticism of the Times.

To perpetuate this great Blessing to ourselves and our Posterity, we must be careful to have a right Apprehension of those Truths on which it bottoms: and moreover, we must be diligent judiciously to apply those Truths to the Exigences of the present Time; that they may become serviceable in fixing

the wavering Opinions of Mankind ; and directing the public Exertions to their proper End.

Respecting the English Government, from the Period of its Commencement, the whole Time antecedent to the *Revolution* in 1688 ought to be considered the Season of its Minority.

The *Bill of Rights* obtained at this Time, in Behalf of the People, was not extorted by Faction ; but was dutifully requested by the Subject, and as liberally granted by the Sovereign.

The great Benefit gained by this Bill, was the obtaining a public and legal Instrument, declaratory of those Rights, to which the Subject had a natural Claim.

The Want of such a public Instrument had been severely felt both by Prince and People : regal as well as popular Incroachments, occasioning great and dismal Calamities, having begun in the first Instance, less from an ill Intention in either of the Parties, than from the Lack of a Standard-Rule or Directory, in such Cases wherein an explicit Dernier-Resort appeared to be absolutely requisite.

The superior State of Liberty in this Country hath specially arisen from the vigorous and determined Efforts of our Ancestors, to settle such an Establishment of the *Christian Religion* as should nearest approximate to the Scripture-Rule. Hence, the scriptural Documents respecting the Nature of civil Government, have been more particularly received among us : and not only taken as our religious Creed, but made the established Law of the Land.

Our

Our Chief Magistrate, is legally entitled, *Our Sovereign Lord the King*; he is the Minister of God; and we esteem and honour him as such. The Majesty we ascribe to him, is in Reference to the Divine Majesty which he represents; and not in any Respect to the presumed Majesty of the People over whom he is set.

That senseless Expression, *The Majesty of the People*, was in the first Instance, the mere Effusion of political Enthusiasm: but being nicely suitable to the Purposes of *Faction*, the Restive and Factious have adopted it as their distinguishing Motto.

But happy for us! our Constitution has provided a Barrier as well against liable Encroachments on the Part of the Prince, as factious Risings and headstrong Oppositions of the People.

Though true *Christianity* and true *Liberty* are perfectly congenial, and cannot possibly subsist the One without the Other; the true Definition of *Liberty* being, *a perfect Freedom to do whatever is serviceable to one's Self and others, and an utter Disability to do any Thing disserviceable to one's Self or Others*; yet the mere Knowledge of this Truth, however advantageous that may be to an Individual, will ever be found to be quite insufficient to procure it public and general Acceptation.

A System naturally inimical to those corrupt and inordinate Affections we carry about us, requires Something independent of ourselves, and quite distinct from our natural Inclinations, to bring to pass its public and general Establishment.

As *Sin* occasioned the Loss of the terrestrial Paradise, and caused this World to become a howling Wilderness ; so will *Christianity* renew the Face of Nature ; and ultimately change those Deformities occasioned by *Sin* into exquisite Beauties.

Hitherto *Christianity* has had but a very partial Establishment in the World : consequently, but a comparatively small Effect of its beneficent Influence hath as yet been seen.

From the History of Nations we may learn the State of the public Establishment of *Christianity* : and by searching the Scriptures may observe how little of Gospel-Purity it has hitherto attained.

If the ancient Government of those Nations that are now become Christian, has been modified answerable to the Acceptation in which the respective Nations profess to embrace and avow their Christian Faith ; the English Government hath been especially so.

When *Christianity* became the established Religion of the *Roman Empire*, if the Minds of Men had before been inclined to a republican or democratical Form of Government, they now found on embracing *Christianity*, that a Monarchy or Government invested in the Hands of one Person, from whom, as from the Fountain-head, Power, Justice, and Honor, were to flow, was the most answerable to the Christian Ideas of the celestial Hierarchy : consequently, foregoing their former Inclination for a republican Government, they readily as from the Dictates of Duty, gave into the warrantable Acceptation of a monarchical Rule : so  
that



that we find no Endeavors were made in the early Ages after the general Establishment of *Christianity*, to introduce again the democratical Kind of Government.

The Papal Usurpation of an ecclesiastical Hierarchy, claiming Sovereignty over all, which gained Ascendency from the Weakness and Wickedness of the temporal Rulers of those Times, was the readier submitted to by the People in General, from the like predominant Ideas of the celestial Hierarchy.

In the latter Ages, it is observable, where Nations have been evidently rightly directed, and by Experience have been proved to have obtained the Sanction of Heaven, in their Opposition to and Renunciation of the Romish Errors, they have not entertained the least Idea of changing their monarchical Government: neither yet have they thought of abolishing the Hierarchy of the Church: well knowing that Orders and Degrees are perfectly consonant to the right Acceptation of pure *Christianity*: but where ever it appears that Dissentions have arisen, and a factious Resistance has been made to the temporal Management of Government, the Opposers have uniformly decried the Hierarchy of the Church as well as the Utility of kingly Government.

From the above Considerations it may be clearly adduced, that though the growing Errors of Government, civil and ecclesiastical, do call for and ought to undergo necessary Reformation; the overturning kingly Government itself, or abolishing

the Hierarchy of the Church, proceeds from a Principle hostile to *Christianity*.

*Reformation* then, it appears on all Hands, is wanting and must be had. If Providence permits *Revolutions*, according to the French Acceptation of the Term, that is, *Convulsions*, to take Place; Punishment for the Neglect and Delay of necessary Reformation, is most assuredly ever meant.

'Tis true, we are not answerable, as Men, for the Non-Performance of Duties of which we have naturally no Knowledge; and concerning which, we have not had the necessary Means of Information: but if, when we may or do know, we willingly neglect; the Sin will most certainly lie at our Door.

When the Devil rebukes Sin, 'tis Time the Sinner bethinks himself, and forsakes it. The Devil is busily occupied in that Work in the present Day. He has been for a long Season, the Seducer, he is at present eminently the Accuser of Mankind.

Abroad, he is vehemently accusing Mankind of those gross, superstitious Errors, which by Reason of his Wiles, they have been for many Ages deceived into: at home, the Non-compliance with his devilish Schemes of false Refinement becomes the Matter of bold Accusation; and by Means of his Agents in all Parts, he is busily fomenting Mischiefs, and spreading Discord and Confusion throughout the Earth.

It hath been reproachfully urged, that our Constitution affords just Liberty enough to enslave Ourselves

Ourselves more effectually than the most absolutely despotic Government could do. But this is the slanderous Reproach of a Knave, who sought to effect the Purpose of his Slyness, by bringing us to undervalue and disesteem the most inestimable Blessing enjoyed by any People on the Face of the Earth.

We are to observe that in Order to invalidate this contumelious Assertion, to prove undeniably the matchless Excellence of our *Constitution*; and perfectly to realize its desirable Effects, it will be absolutely requisite to complete the ecclesiastical Part of our Polity : and to establish our *religious Liberty*, and the *Discipline of the Church*, upon as solid and publicly ratified a Basis, as that which supports and secures our civil Rights and Immunities.

I am not going in this Place to descant on the comparative Excellence of the present reformed CHURCH OF ENGLAND, nor to treat of the Means whereby our *Church Reformation* was first begun ; neither am I going to cavil with the several Sects who have thought proper to dissent from the present national Establishment ; but since the Multiplicity of religious Dissentions and Controversies do prove that Unity hath not as yet obtained in the public *Church of Christ*, I will now proceed to point out the Means whereby that *blessed Unity*, so devoutly to be wished for, may be happily obtained ; and *Christianity*, being well understood, may become the Healing of the Nations, and the Joy of the whole Earth.

Notwithstanding

Notwithstanding that Spirit of Moderation which so eminently characterized the English Reformers in their Opposition to the flagrant Errors of the *Church of Rome*, might have been expected to have had such Influence on the Minds of *Protestants*, as to have led them in the Spirit of Meekness, calmly to have composed their particular Differences, and specially to have agreed One with the Other in promoting *Christian Peace*; and though the *English reformed Church* which breathes a genuine Spirit of Toleration, and whose Doctrine will bear the Test of scriptural Enquiry, has flourished (bating some few casual Checks) for so many Years; yet the religious Differences and Dissentions among *Christians*, have not at all decreased: but Strifes and Animosities, to the Scandal of *Christian Professors*, are found exceedingly to prevail throughout the Christian World.

Under the present defective Establishment of the *Christian Church*, it must and ever will be so. *Christianity* will continue to be little understood, and less practised: and the *Christian Ministers* will continue to find themselves disqualified to procure that suitable Respect which ought ever to be paid to them and to their Ministry.

If the *Clergy*, still moved with a rightly directed and lively Zeal to advance the salutary Work of a *rational Reformation*, were to make a voluntary Proffer to resign to the Disposal of *Parliament*, the whole Patrimony of the *Church*; conditionally however, that no Part of the ecclesiastical Revenues, of which the *Clergy*, as Representatives of the *Church*,  
should

should thus for the Sake of obtaining a thorough *Church-Reform*, voluntarily disseize themselves of, be appropriated to any merely secular Use : and if, being mindful how imperfect the *Constitution* of the *Church*, as to the Appointment of public Officers had been left at the Time of the General Separation from *Popery* ; that many Relicks of papal Superstition, which have occasioned great Schisms and Divisions among *Protestants*, still remained ; yet desirous to abide by the reasonable Rule of maintaining Orders and Degrees in the *Church*, which is not only warrantable from Scripture, but perfectly congenial to the Nature of our *civil Constitution* ; they were to recommend to *Parliament*, to abolish entirely all Archbishoprics, Bishoprics, Deaneries with their Chapters, Archdeaconries, Prebendaries, Vicarages, Rectories, and other clerical Incumbences ; and that the ecclesiastical Officers in Time to come, do consist of a Metropolitan or Chief Bishop, to bear the Title of *Primate of the Church of England*, and under him, twelve Bishops, and as many Priests as there are Parishes throughout the Realm ; and the *Parliament* seconding the Views of the *Convocation*, and determining to set an Example to the World of national *Justice* and *Liberality*, would proceed maturely to weigh and consider the Premises, and of themselves engage to indemnify to the full all Persons who in the Prosecution of this most glorious Undertaking, may become pecuniary Sufferers ; the Blessing of the Almighty would certainly attend such their well meant and united Endeavors.

The *Parliament* would well remember that the *civil Constitution* not having been settled on a firm Basis, when the CHURCH OF ENGLAND forsook the *Errors of Popery*, many Parts of the *Church Establishment*, at that Time, and since, must necessarily have been left in an unsettled State.

The *King*, in his own Person, at the Time of the *Reformation*, exercised the Power derived from the Title of *Supreme Head of the Church*; and appointed his Vicegerent. But the right Direction and Exercise of such Power, being now better understood, the former Inconveniences would of Course be remedied.

Our *Constitution*; as it now stands, acknowledges no Act of the King, as valid, which is not warranted by parliamentary Sanction. The ROYAL PREROGATIVE must ever be understood to be the Exercise of such Power as is invested in the King, by Authority of *Parliament*; for our King is none Other than a parliamentary or constitutional King: hence the villainous Artifice of the French Conventionists in pretending to make War with the King of *England*, as distinct from the Nation, is evidently seen.

We then, as *Christians*, acknowledging that the *State* or *Government* of every Community, being truly the *Appointment of God*, is entitled to the *Supreme Direction* of the Affairs of the *Church*; and that the *Parliament*, to wit, the *King*, *Lords*, and *Commons*, in *Parliament assembled*, being the legitimate and acknowledged *Estate* of the *Government* of these Realms, is consequently the *Supreme Moderator*  
and

and *Director* of the Affairs of the *Church of England* ; will readily acquiesce in the parliamentary Resolves.

The Patrimony of the *Church* being thus resigned to the Disposal of *Parliament* ; and the *Parliament* rightly considering the Expediency of purchasing into their own Hands all Advowsons and Impropriations, as well as settling the perpetual Modus of Tythes, and ascertaining the absolute Revenue of the *Church* ; and further advising with the *Clergy* touching the new Arrangement and Ordination of their Body ; and the *Clergy* acting up to the Dignity of their Profession, and approving their Worthiness by the exalted Integrity of their Proceedings ; dutifully representing to *Parliament*, how much the Success of their Measures will depend on judiciously offering to the Understanding of the People right Notices of the Nature of their *Christian Profession* and *Duty* ; and the *Parliament* exhorting the *Convocation* courageously to proceed ; and further assuring them of the Earnestness and Sincerity of their Purpose, duly to heed such Advice as may appear to have an evident Tendency to promote the Honor of God by supporting the Cause of true Religion, and advancing the Welfare and Happiness of Mankind : the *Clergy*, I say, thus animated ; and invoking the Aidance of supernal Grace, proceeding to set forth the great Propriety of withdrawing that implicit Confidence which has for Ages, been reposed in Inventions, merely human ; and having by a liberal and public Enquiry into the Grounds of receiving the sacred Writings as *the Revelation of* ,

God, established beyond all Contradiction, their Divine Authority ; pointing out how absolutely necessary it is for the Furtherance of the Knowledge of true *Christianity*, to make the Scriptures, the sole Rule or Directory of public, as well as private Worship : and that though the *State* or *Government* has for Ages assumed the Power of regulating the Modes and Forms of public Worship, and public Ceremonies, and has enjoined public religious Ordinances ; and though till the *Fulness of Time* for the clear Apprehension and general Acceptation of *pure Christianity*, the Providence of God has permitted it so to be ; yet in the Reason of Things, carnal Ordinances are altogether inadequate to regulate spiritual Concerns : the *Clergy* thus proceeding to represent to *Parliament*, that to do away the contentious Disputations among *Christians*, touching theological Points, and to remove every Thing that may obstruct the free, pure, and united Adoration of all Denominations of *Christians*, it will be meet for the *State* or *national Government* freely to go back to its proper and natural Ordination ; viz. *That of the civil Protector of the acknowledged Rights of the Community, as well collectively as individually* : that a Freedom of Thought is the Chief of those Rights : and that it is specially incumbent on the *State* or *Government* to adopt such Measures as may best secure this intellectual Freedom, whole and entire ; and withal, prevent to the Utmost, the Members of the Community from the Commission of Acts detrimental to the General Weal.



The *Parliament* being happily led into these Views ; and rightly considering that the only certain Means of quieting for ever the Differences, quelling the Animosities, and entirely removing the Schisms in the *Christian Church*, will be in ascertaining by free and public Enquiry, *The sure Truth of Revelation* ; and having so done, proceeding to regulate the Mode of public Worship by the precise Rule of *Christ* himself ; will be ready to give their full Consent, and express their perfect Acquiescence herein.

If the *Parliament*, being by the *Clergy* advised thereto, for the Purpose of preventing Schisms and Divisions among *Christians*, were to adopt such Measures as these, for the Regulation and better Performance of public religious Duties : namely, To grant a legal Exoneration as to the public Observance of all Festivals and Solemnities hitherto appointed to be celebrated in the *Church of England*, with this single Exception, that the first Day of the Week commonly called Sunday, but more properly the Lord's Day, be alone set apart for public Worship ; and that the Form of public Adoration on this Day, be not only answerable to the exact Prescript of *Christ* himself, but that it be confined to the precise Words of our Saviour, from which no *Christian* can possibly dissent : that seeing *Christianity* is now become the established Religion of divers Countries, and has taken deep Root in the World, *public Preaching*, under the present Circumstances of the *Church*, cannot be of so much Avail and Importance as *private Teaching* ; nay, on mature Consideration

it must appear evident, that *private Teaching*, either by Writing or otherwise, is the only proper Method in the present State of the *Church*, of disciplining the Unlearned ; that *all public Preaching* be therefore henceforth entirely abolished ; and that the *Clergy*, being enjoined, do set forth in Writing the great Importance of a rational and strict Observation of *Family Duties* ; pointing out the best Means of effecting their due Observance by enacting Laws for the Promotion and Encouragement of *Family Unity* ; the Christian World would then assume a quite different Aspect to that which it hath hitherto presented to public View.

That neither *public Preaching* nor *private Teaching* hath hitherto had the salutary Effect of bringing Mankind in General to such a right Apprehension of *Christianity*, as to influence them freely to practise its Injunctions, will appear less to be wondered at, when we consider the Circumstances of past Times.

To bring the World to a right Sense and general Practice of *Christian Duties*, the MAGISTRACY must become the TEACHER. But it is not enough that mere Reasons of *State* should stimulate *Government* to meddle in religious Concerns ; the pure Convictions of Truth which operate in the Mind of the Individual, must also direct and influence the Magistrate. If we recollect what Means the Providence of God made choice of in bringing about the *Reformation* from *Popery* in our *Church*, as well as the State of *Church Affairs* among us ever since, we can be at no Loss to account for our comparatively mean Attainments in *Christian Virtues*.

But

But laying to Heart, and rightly considering the signally awakening Occurrences of our Time, let the *Government* of this Country be instant in setting forth a bright Example to *Christendom* and to the *World*, of genuine Liberality of Spirit: let them speedily and in good Earnest, seek the Means of promoting a *General Pacification*: to which End, it will be Expedient that the confederated Nations combine in a still closer Union and Compact: that they determine to keep the *French* within the Limits of their proper Bounds: that having compassed this, they leave them, as they ought to be, entirely to themselves. That the confederated Nations do *Justice* to the Cause of the INJURED *POLES*; by granting them Restitution of their national Rights and Immunities: and having by such a frank and liberal Spirit demonstrated a high Regard for the individual Rights of Nations; and a strong Desire to promote the general Interest and Welfare of Mankind; proving themselves hereby worthy to become the *Pacifcators of the World*; let them proceed to establish a *General Guarantee* of their respective just Rights: ascertaining what those Rights are, by consulting the *Laws of Nations*; and revising and establishing them on the Rule of *immutable Justice*.

The General Affairs of Nations respecting each other, being thus happily brought into a fair Train of amicable Adjustment, there will be a free Scope for the *General Establishment of civil and religious Liberty*.

*England,*

*England*, on whom the Eye of *Christendom* is fixed ; *England*, I say, especially at this Time, manifesting a firm, determined, and withal a truly prudent Spirit, may become eminently instrumental in bringing about this *Glorious Change in the general Face of Things* ; by the judicious Measures of her internal Arrangements and Regulations.

Let it be *England's* early and zealous Care to vindicate the *Truth* of God's Word, by instituting a liberal public Enquiry into the Grounds of receiving *the Bible as a Divine Revelation*. This will stimulate other Nations to prosecute a like free and rational Enquiry ; and it will be glorious for this Country to take the Lead in so momentous and highly honourable an Undertaking : an Undertaking at this Time absolutely necessary : and which Nothing less than the public Sanction and Authorization of the *Legislature*, can render competent to its desirable End.

How by such a rational Disquisition would the Mouth of all Iniquity be stopped ! How would *the Glorious Truth of God* be made manifest ! And *Falsehood* hide its detestable Head !

The pure Organization of the Members in the Ministry of the *Christian Church*, would follow as a Matter of Course.

Herein likewise it especially behoves us, by an exemplary Propriety of Choice, to set before the Face of *Christendom*, such a System of ecclesiastical Polity, as may challenge Acceptation throughout the Christian World.

*A Metropolitan*

A *Metropolitan* or *Primate*, appointed by the *Sovereignty* of a Country, to preside over the Affairs of the Church; and under him, twelve Bishops or Pastors, all of equal Degree in the Church, having the Care of a like Number of Dioceses into which the whole Territory of a State might be divided; and as many Priests as there are Parishes throughout the Realm; may be presumed to be a *Constitution* more warrantable from the *Scriptures*, and the Nature and Spirit of the *Christian Religion*, than any that hath hitherto been established on the Earth.

The *Primate* or *Archbishop*, as the first Dignitary in the Church, and the first Officer in the State after the *Sovereign*, ought undoubtedly to have an Establishment answerable to the Eminence of the *National Church* over which he presides; as well to represent the *National Dignity* and *Consequence*, as to have wherewithal to be exemplary in Christian Munificence and Hospitality. The *Bishops* to have a suitable and equal Revenue paid them by the State; and so likewise the *Priests*: for the *Clergy* in this advanced Age of the Church, ought ever to look to the State, and not to private Individuals, for their necessary Maintenance and Support.

The whole Revenue of the Church, being invested in the Hands of the State, and Parliament having apportioned the twelve Dioceses or Bishoprics; the new Ordination of Church Officers might, in the first Instance, be determined by Lot: that is to say, the *Archbishops* of *Canterbury* and *York* to draw  
Lots

Lots who shall be *Metropolitan* or *Primate* of the *National Church* of *England*: the *Archbishop* not chosen, to be elected Chief of the twelve Bishops; the other eleven to be likewise chosen by Lot from among the present Bishops: the Rest being excluded by Lot, still to retain their present Revenues as Pensions from the *State*; so likewise the Rest of the *Clergy*, who being supernumerary in the new Establishment, will necessarily be out of Office in the *Church*.

But to settle the future Mode of electing the *Ministry* of the *Church*, we must descend to further Considerations. It will be necessary exactly to state the peculiar Functions of the *Metropolitan*, the *Bishops*, and the *Priests*: as likewise the Regulations for public Worship, and other Particulars.

It has been before observed, that carnal Ordinances, that is, such as proceed merely from Man's Will, are altogether inadequate to regulate spiritual Concerns; and it is nothing to be wondered at, that Dissentions have heretofore prevailed in the *public Christian Church*, when we consider that 'Quot Homines? Tot Sententiæ.' But if, having ascertained beyond the Power of Contradiction, the Divine Authority of the *Scriptures*, we make them, as we ought, our sole Rule or Directory; and studiously avoiding all Manner of religious Contention, which the Apostle calls, vain Janglings and Disputations; we annul the existing Ordinances of the *Church*, abrogate all public Observations of *Holidays*, and totally do away all compulsory Acts respecting *Religion* which are found to be  
hostile

hostile to intellectual Liberty ; we shall then be enabled to *simplify the Mode of public Worship*, following the Direction and using the precise Words of our Saviour ; and appointing *the Lord's Day* to be the only Day that *Christians* assemble and join together in *social Worship* : and with Respect to private or family religious Duties, *public Preaching* being wholly laid aside, Means be adopted, to establish such a *scriptural Ministry of Teaching*, as may through the Divine Assistance, be found effectual in advancing the Knowledge and Practice of *real Christianity*.

The *Constitution* of the *Clergy* being admitted to be settled on the Plan proposed ; and it being in Contemplation to go through a thorough *Church Reform* ; the *Clergy* having freely divested themselves of all secular Power and Authority, confining themselves solely to the Discharge of their ministerial Function ; and the *Bishops*, as they are merely *spiritual Counsellors*, and ought not to constitute Part of the Legislature ; having freely relinquished their parliamentary Attendance ; we will suppose them to be now by *Parliament* convened in *Convocation*.

Their Business in *Convocation* ought to be, To consider what Regulations from Time to Time may appear to be necessary respecting religious Matters, and to address the *Parliament* thereupon. The *parochial Clergy*, by Letter, regularly informing their *Dio-cesan* of the State of their respective Parishes ; and the *Bishop*, when Circumstances so require, stating the Matters which within his particular District

appear to be cognizable by the *Convocation*. Hence it may be seen, that the *Convocation* is formed of the *Metropolitan*, as the Head, and the *Bishops*, exclusive of the Rest of the *Clergy*.

When Matters are opened in *Convocation*, there should be a perfect Unanimity of Sentiment as to what Regulations may be deemed necessary to be proposed to the *Legislature*, before the *Metropolitan* be authorised to address the *Parliament* thereon.

The *Clergy* being thus restored to their proper and natural Character, that of *the spiritual Counselors of the State*; it remains with *Parliament* freely to debate upon whatever Matters may be thus brought before them; and to exercise their Wisdom either in their Adoption or Rejection; or in enacting Laws thereupon.

Suppose the *Convocation* thus formed, viewing the present Appearance of the *Christian Profession* in the World, imploring the Aidance of Divine Grace, and consulting the Scriptures, do set about with a Christian Zeal to remedy the present sad State of Things: the jarring Contentions concerning the Modes and Forms of public religious Ceremonies, and public Adoration, will doubtless strike their Notice, and awaken their Concern.

They may be led from hence to recommend to Parliament, utterly to abolish all public religious Ceremonies: many of which, though perfectly innocent in themselves; yet have given Occasion to the Craft of the Devil, acting on the weak Minds of Christians, to produce the most mischievous Effects: and to minister Food for Cavilings and endless Disputations.

They



They may moreover be led, to recommend, that *Parish Churches* only, be by Law allowed for the mixt Body of Christians to assemble in for the Celebration of public Worship; and that the *Lord's Day* be the only Day set apart for this great Solemnity. That the Meeting of Christians once together on this Day, at a convenient Hour to be fixed, be sufficient for the Purpose of addressing Almighty God in united Prayer; and that the Prayer to be thus publicly and unitedly offered up, be the LORD's PRAYER ONLY. That all Distinctions of Pews or Seats in Churches do cease. That seeing Christians when assembled for social Worship, do meet as Fellow-Creatures adoring their *Common Creator*, civil Distinctions ought then and there to be laid aside. The *Priest* alone to be distinguished from the People; and he only, as the Speaker in the Name of all. That seeing the *Act of Adoration* demands the deepest Reverence of Mind, a limited Time, to be determined on, be set apart after Christians are thus met in the more immediate Presence of their GREAT GOD, during which, the most profound Silence be observed, for the Purpose of exercising such *mental Recollection*, as suits the Occasion: when this limited Space of Time be elapsed, the *Priest* standing up or kneeling, as his Mind will direct him, the People also reverently kneeling or standing, using indifferently which Position soever the Individual may judge right in his own Mind; the *Priest* having in such like Words as these, addressed the People, *Let us pray to Almighty God in the Name and Words of Jesus*

*Christ, his Blessed Son our Saviour, with the deepest Reverence prays to God in the Words of the Lord's Prayer, all the People answering, Amen : then concluding with such a scriptural Blessing as this, The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, the Congregation reverently depart.*

As to the Celebration of the *Sacrament, the Baptism* of Christians, whether Infants, or Adults, &c. it will be expedient for Christians privately met together ; that is to say, for Friends and Relatives, having been duly instructed in the Knowledge of Christianity, to perform these great religious Duties at *Home*, as the Sense of Duty shall prompt them : thereby cutting off all Occasions of Dissention in the Christian World : there being no constraining Law that may be supposed to force the Consciences of the People.

But to awaken Mankind to a due Sense of their Duty, it will be necessary to establish such a Christian Teaching Ministry, as may by the Divine Blessing, quicken in the Minds of the People, a right Apprehension of True Religion : and thereby dispelling those dismal Clouds of Ignorance which now overspread and darken the World ; and opening the bright Manifestations and piercing Convictions of Truth ; may usher in the *Glorious Triumph of Christ and his Saints* on the Earth.

Let the *Convocation* recommend the Establishment of *public Parochial Schools*, wherein the Rudiments of the Christian Religion may be taught : these to be initiatory to all other public Seminaries. That  
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the Mode of Teaching, and Matter of Instruction, in such initiatory Schools be determined on in the *Convocation*, and sanctioned by *Parliament*: and that no Public Teacher be permitted to teach otherwise than in the Manner authorised by the State. That the Office of a Teacher in these Parochial Schools be held highly honorable: and that the supernumerary Clergy be at first nominated to such Office. That great Diligence be recommended in teaching the People the Knowledge of their Christian Duty: That the *Convocation* proceed to lay before *Parliament* such and such Regulations, as may appear necessary to advance the Work of Reformation; particularly to lay down Rules and Directions in their future Choice of Christian Ministers, and to point out the peculiar Duties of their Charge.

The Office of a Christian Teacher in the Public Parochial Schools, ought to be considered as a very honorable Dignity; yet the Emolument should be much inferior to that of a Priest. The Priest ought to have an Income fully adequate to his Situation: for as the Clergy are taken entirely from the Concerns of secular Business, and called to attend wholly to the Work of the Ministry; so should the Provision for their Support be such as may raise them above all servile Dependence.

All public Preaching being discontinued, the peculiar Office of a Priest will be, To pray on the *Lord's Day* in Behalf of the People in the Congregation, and to bless the People in the Name of the Lord: to oversee the Work of Christian Instruction

tion in the Public Parochial School: to be ready to visit such Families as shall so require, for the Purpose of spiritual Advice, baptizing Children, administering the Sacrament, &c. &c.

The Convocation considering how much the political Welfare of the *State* depends on the strict Attention of the People to their social and family Duties; will be very earnest in promoting the best Means for their greatest Improvement in these highly essential Points. The Duty of Man to his Maker, of Wives to their Husbands, of Children to their Parents, Servants to their Masters; and Subjects to the State, ought to be laid down in the plainest and most instructive Point of View.

That the *Convocation* recommend to *Parliament* to annul the *Marriage-Act*. And for the better securing the Natural Tie of Relationship, and the Unity and Interest of Families, which is an Object of the utmost Importance as to the General Welfare of the Community, it be enacted that *Marriage*, being a private Family Concern, ought to be solemnized, not in the public Church, but privately among the Friends of the united Families: and that it be at the Option of the Heads of such united Families, what Religious Rites to make Use of, at such Solemnization: and that to give Validity to such Marriage, the *State* should enact, that certain obligatory Conditions, which should afterwards be held legally binding, be stipulated by the Heads of the respective Families on Behalf of the betrothed Parties, which should be mutually agreed upon before  
the

the Solemnization. That early Marriage be greatly recommended; and that public Rewards and Honors be conferred on Families deserving the general Esteem of the Community; for their honorable Regard to, and excellent Discharge of their respective Christian Duties.

Though the Observation of the Great Christian Festivals, and other Solemnities appointed to be celebrated in the *Church of England*, as it is at this Day, be, with Respect to their further public Celebration, recommended to be thus laid aside; yet such Families as choose privately to observe them, ought to use the most perfect Freedom herein. And doubtless, when all Apprehensions of legal Restraint shall be forgotten, Posterity will do ample Justice to the superior Excellence of the present *Church of England*; by voluntarily retaining most Parts of her Ritual in the Offices of private Family Devotion.

While Mankind then are thus initiating themselves into the Knowledge of Christianity, the Public Priest will be necessarily wanting in private Families, to direct the Performance of religious Duties: but when Christian Knowledge becomes greatly enlarged, the Head of a Family will then with Propriety assume that Rank which Providence designs; and become a Teacher and a Priest to his Household. So that the Public Priest will then have but to inspect into the religious State of his Parish, to pray publicly in the Midst of the Congregation, and to transmit to his Bishop, from Time to Time, the necessary Information.

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The Ministers of the Church ought to have every public Mark of Deference paid to them in Respect to their sacred Ministry. But it behoves the *State* warily to observe them; and to see that every Act of their Ministry be clearly warranted by the *Scripture*; and that it be such as is evidently conducive to the spiritual Good of the People.

When a Priest dies, the *State*, if need be, ought to see that due Provision be made for his Family; and that due Honor be paid to his Memory. The Bishop of the Diocese, on the Demise of a Priest, to visit the Parish, and to ordain the Public Parochial Teacher to the Priesthood in the Room of the Deceased: moreover to appoint a fit Person, namely, the Head of a Family in the Parish, such an One as would choose to accept the Office, and whom the Parishioners approve of, as One exemplary in the Christian Discipline and Order of his Family, to be the Public Parochial Teacher's Successor.

The Public Parochial Teacher's Emolument being but small, his Office being rather of Honor than of Profit, and not being reckoned as one of the Clergy, though his Office be preparatory to the Ministerial Function, and though called to the Place of a Public Teacher in the Parish; yet he may lawfully prosecute his secular Business as before: but when ordained to the Priesthood, he then must wholly separate from temporal Business, and give himself up altogether to the Work of the sacred Ministry.

When

But when a Bishop dies, the *Metropolitan* determines by Lot among the Priests in the Diocese of the Deceased, who shall be his Successor. The *Metropolitan* ordains him to the Episcopal Dignity; and the Priesthood is to be filled up in the like Manner as though the Priest had been defunct. But the *Metropolitan*, as being the first Officer in the State after the Sovereign, ought to be nominated by the Sovereign himself, and ordained by the Bishops in Convocation. The peculiar Duty of the Bishops, is to visit the Parishes in their respective Dioceses at the Decease of a Priest: to ordain a Successor in his Room; and to appoint a public parochial Teacher in the Room of him that is removed to the Priesthood: to sit in Convocation: to receive from Time to Time, Accounts from the Priests of the several Parishes in his Diocese, the State of their respective Parishes: to lay such Matters as may appear to be necessary, before the Convocation, and to debate with his Brethren thereupon. The *Metropolitan*, as before observed, presides in the Convocation; and lays such Matters respecting Religion before the *Parliament*, as shall be unanimously agreed upon in Convocation.

Thus have I at length, by Divine Assistance, been enabled to effect the Purpose, which I believe God has put into my Mind. May the Almighty give a Blessing to these my Endeavors for the Promotion of the Knowledge of *His Truth* among Men; and may the Hearts of the Disobedient be turned to the Wisdom of the Just; that

*all* the Ends of the Earth may acknowledge the Glory of God.

Great would be the salutary Consequence which would most surely result from the Adoption of these Plans. Wars would in a little Time cease from one End of the World to the other. The Nations would beat their Swords into Plough-Shares, and their Spears into Pruning-Hooks. Mankind would freely cultivate the Arts of Peace. At Home, we should be rightly instructed in the Art of sweetening and embellishing our Lives. The Knowledge of ourselves, and of our Duty, would be opened clearly to the Apprehension of every One of us. We should no longer say, the One to the Other, ‘*Know the Lord,*’ for all would know Him, and would adore and reverence Him for His unspeakable Goodness and Blessings to the Children of Men. The whining Cant of Hypocrisy would no longer impose its baneful Deception. The Sheep would be taught to hear the Voice of the true Shepherd, and would abide altogether within his Fold. We should no longer fear the Stroke of Vengeance : for the Enemy within being vanquished, we should be freed from all Apprehension of Evil from without. Nay, the Seasons would administer to our Comfort, and we should be blessed with the kind Influences of the Heavens. We should no longer be molested with jarring Contentions ; but should be capacitated to enjoy the delightful Sweets of *Peace* and *Unity*. No Murmuring in our Cities, no Complaining in our Streets !

Happy,



Happy, the People in such a Case ! Yea,  
Blessed are the People who have the Lord for  
their God !

Praise God, from whom all Blessings flow,  
Praise Him, all Creatures here below :  
Praise Him above, Ye angelic Host !  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !

JUNE, 1793.

*F I N I S.*

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E R R A T A.

Page 27, last Line, *for n read in.*—Page 45, Line 17, *for had the*  
*Aid, &c. read never had the Aid, &c.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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